

THE
**NATURAL
REVOLUTION**
ISSUE



**WHAT'S NATURE'S
WORTH?**

No one wants to put a price on Nature, but we do need a better grasp of its value

BAMBOO LOO ROLL

It's tackling global deforestation one wipe at a time – and picking up some A-list fans along the way

VALLEY FEST

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**PICKING AN
ECO CUP**

Reusable coffee cups are the way forward – but are they all created equal?



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OH MY GOD! IT'S THE CHURCH • YAMA WARASHI • RHAIN
DIRTY BOURBON RIVER SHOW • ELI WEST • MESADORM
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WILDLIFE WALKS • MEET THE FARM ANIMALS • VINTAGE TRACTORS

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Welcome to MyGreenPod Magazine!

It's time to step up for Nature. We've made great strides thanks to individual actions – from ditching single-use plastics to switching brand allegiances – but now we need a full-on shift that puts the health of the whole at the centre of every decision we make. This issue shares some of the ways you can do just that.



Katie Hill
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
katie@mygreenpod.com

About us

MyGreenPod Ltd is an independent, family-run UK business, founded by Katie Hill and Jarvis Smith. We want to share the real stories behind the brands and people working tirelessly to offer ethical alternatives to mainstream products and services.

You might not see these options on the high street and they may not be the first to appear in online searches. But they are on

mygreenpod.com. These Hero products and services support the shift to a more conscious lifestyle – and may help you save some cash (while having some fun) on the way!



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PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

7m
number of
disposable coffee
cups we throw
away daily



5kWh
estimated electricity required
to transmit 1GB of data

9.8bn predicted world
population by 2050 (UN)





THE GREATEST BEER SINCE SLICED BREAD

A fruity and hoppy ale, brewed with leftover bread from our stores and bakers – fighting food waste and ocean pollution in one, with 10p from every bottle we sell donated to Surfers Against Sewage to support UK beach cleans.



Iceland

Available in store and at iceland.co.uk

Iceland Bread Board Pale Ale, 330ml, £5.50 per litre. Subject to availability. Offer UK only, excluding the Hebrides. Surfers against Sewage is a Registered charity No. 1145877



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MY GREEN
pod.com
HERO
SUMMER '18

Introducing our Heroes of the Season!
These superstar products and services are ethical alternatives from companies that are doing things differently (and brilliantly).
View all our Heroes at mygreenpod.com/heroes

BUSINESS



**GREEN ELEMENT
SMALL BUSINESS PACKAGE**
This low-cost package has been designed to lower a company's environmental impact and boost its bottom line.
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greenelement.co.uk

HEALTH & BEAUTY

**OBCo
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[@originalbeard1](https://twitter.com/originalbeard1)
originalbeard.co

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INSECT
REPELLENT
SPRAY**



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[@incognitoUK](https://twitter.com/incognitoUK)
lessmosquito.com

HOME & GARDEN



LANDPODS
A sleepover den, children's playhouse or pop-up glamping solution – the possibilities are endless. The all-terrain adjustable legs and base mean Landpods can be placed anywhere, with no costly foundations required. You'll also leave only footprints when you pack up and move on. A perfect way to be closer to Nature without getting soggy!
[@Landpod](https://twitter.com/Landpod)
landpod.co.uk



**ABACA ORGANIC
MATTRESS**

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[@AbacaOrganic](https://twitter.com/AbacaOrganic)
abaca-organic.co.uk

ARTS & FASHION



**RUBYMOON
GYM TO SWIM**

RubyMoon turns waste into beautiful garments that have a low carbon footprint. It's the first (and only) swim and active wear company to make positive environmental and social impacts, without compromising on look or quality.
[@RubyMoonSwim](https://twitter.com/RubyMoonSwim)
rubymoon.org.uk



**PO-ZU
BUTTERFLY SNEAKER**

This unisex vegan lace-up sneaker from ethic footwear company Po-Zu is made in Sri Lanka, with an organic cotton upper and locally sourced Fair Trade Rubber sole. Lightweight and breathable, it's perfect for summer.
[@Po_Zu](https://twitter.com/Po_Zu)
po-zu.com



**WHERE DOES IT COME
FROM? ETHICAL SCARF**

Ethical and fully traceable scarves made from 100% handwoven khadi cotton. Large, versatile and available in lots of designs.
[@WhereDoesItCome](https://twitter.com/WhereDoesItCome)
wheredoesitcomefrom.co.uk

**WILBY
VROCKIN CLUTCH**

Certified by Peta and made in the UK, these sustainable vegan bags are made from lightweight cork 'leather'. With a deep compartment for storage, they're perfect for formalwear and can be dressed down for pretty much any other occasion. Like other products from Wilby, this clutch proves fashion doesn't need to compromise on ethics.
[@wilbyveganbags](https://twitter.com/wilbyveganbags)
wilbyclutch.com



TOP 5
SUMMER
SWITCHES

- Make sure your reusable coffee cup isn't adding to the plastics problem: Huskups are made from the humble rice husk, a renewable and biodegradable resource.
[@huskup_eco](https://twitter.com/huskup_eco)
huskup.com
- The Cheeky Panda Toilet Tissue is made from bamboo, the world's fastest-growing plant. It's soft, strong, skin friendly and sustainable.
[@TheCheekyPanda1](https://twitter.com/TheCheekyPanda1)
thecheekypanda.co.uk
- Switch your home to a renewable energy supply from Octopus Energy. As well as sleeping better at night, you'll almost certainly be rewarded with cheaper energy bills.
[@octopus_energy](https://twitter.com/octopus_energy)
octopus.energy/mygreencollective
- Detox your beauty regime and switch to certified natural or organic products. To make life easy, Weleda's entire range of natural and organic cosmetics is NATRUE certified.
[@WeledaUK](https://twitter.com/WeledaUK)
weleda.co.uk
- If you eat dairy, make sure you're getting it from the best source possible. All Yeo Valley's products are '100% Yeoganic' – organic and then some. Try the Madagascan Vanilla Ice Cream.
[@yeovalley](https://twitter.com/yeovalley)
yeovalley.co.uk



WHAT'S *Nature's* WORTH?

No one wants to put a price on Nature – but we do need a better understanding of its value

O August marked Earth Overshoot Day 2018: the day on which humans used more from Nature than our planet is able to regenerate in the entire year. We're currently using 1.7 Earths; we're overfishing, overharvesting forests and emitting more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than ecosystems can absorb.

The date has been creeping forward since 1970, when the Global Footprint Network estimated that, for the first time, we used more ecological resources and services than Nature was able to restore. Natural processes – from water filtration to crop pollination – underpin all human activities: they are the life support systems upon which our growth, wellbeing and prosperity depend. If we don't get our consumption in check our days as a species will be numbered.

PRICES Vs VALUE

In 2011 Defra published a guide 'to provide an introduction to the valuation of ecosystem services', which are understood as the benefits we receive from Nature. The idea of putting a value on ecosystems was interpreted by many as an attempt to

commodify the natural world, but natural capital proponents do not advocate the 'pricing of Nature'. Instead, their core assertion is that prices have failed to reflect the true value of the natural world, and that the economic systems we're using are broken.

A natural capital approach works to illuminate Nature's often hidden value – whether it be economic, social, environmental, cultural or spiritual, and whether this value is expressed in qualitative, quantitative or monetary terms. The important point is that price and value aren't interchangeable; traditional prices almost never reflect the immense value of Nature.

THE MORAL QUESTION

Some take the position that it's immoral to ascribe any tangible value to the natural world. But when we buy almost any physical product we are, in a sense, commodifying Nature by signifying our willingness to pay a designated price in exchange for ownership of natural materials, organisms and their derivatives.

In this way, much of Nature is already commodified, and has been for thousands of years. A natural capital approach, far from abetting this neoliberal model, turns it on its head. While

there are many prices for the products that are created from Nature and natural derivatives, the value of leaving the natural world intact is often far less understood – or worse, regarded as zero. Framing these resources as natural capital and working to illuminate their value is a way of recognising the value of leaving Nature intact.

Much of the debate comes down to language. In a bid to address some people's unease with the term 'ecosystem services', in January 2018 30 global experts associated with the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) suggested a move away from the term, and towards 'Nature's Contributions to People'. They argued the latter was a more inclusive term that bypassed perceived failings of the ecosystem services framing. IPBES chair Sir Robert Watson said, 'Nature underpins every person's wellbeing and ambitions – from health and happiness to prosperity and security. People need to better understand the full value of Nature to ensure its protection and sustainable use.'

Ultimately the message remains the same, irrespective of the language used: we fundamentally depend on Nature in a multitude of ways, and if Nature continues to be degraded, we will all suffer.

GOING MAINSTREAM

In March 2007, environment ministers from the G8+5 countries met in Potsdam, Germany to propose a proper analysis of the global economic benefit of biological diversity, the costs of the loss of biodiversity and the failure to take protective measures versus the costs of effective conservation. The result was the launch of a global TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) study, designed to make Nature's values visible.

As well as getting to grips with the inherent value of our natural bounty, the goal of TEEB is to embed the values and benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into decision-making at all levels.

The TEEB for Business Coalition – now the Natural Capital Coalition – was launched in December 2012. Its purpose was to study and standardise natural capital approaches, and enable its valuation and reporting in business. The goal was to engage key stakeholders from business, government and civil society to join a leading-edge collaboration that would shape the future

not even the tiniest organism can be truly understood in isolation from the larger system

of business thinking and action on natural capital. TEEB for Business evolved into the Natural Capital Coalition in 2014; it had become clear that the entire system – not just business – needed to come together to tackle these issues and embed natural capital thinking in mainstream discourse.

JOINING THE DOTS

Many organisations have a policy on water, another on energy, another on biodiversity, another on forests – the list goes on. Often the people working in these areas don't talk to each another; in some cases they are actually in competition for budget allocation. A policy on one of these areas, without an understanding of how it connects with the others, means we're often playing a four-dimensional game of tug of war, attempting to keep interconnected systems in balance without understanding the ways in which they work and connect.

The natural world and ecosystems are fundamentally symbiotic, so our approach to their conservation and restoration must be similarly interconnected if it is to succeed.

A systems approach allows businesses to understand fundamental interdependencies, tipping points and thresholds. If farmers deplete the local water table, the health of local vegetation may be may affected; this could cause insect habitats and populations to decrease, affecting the pollination services necessary for the success of the farmers' crops.

UNDERSTANDING THE WEB OF LIFE

In the late 18th century, Alexander von Humboldt became the first to recognise the individual elements of the natural world as parts in a larger 'eco-system', though the term wouldn't be coined until 1935. In his writings, Humboldt described Nature as an intricate and dynamically interconnected 'web of life', and suggested that not even the tiniest organism can be truly understood in isolation from the larger system.

In a recent article, Peru's former environment minister Manuel Pulgar-Vidal wrote that even as late as 1992, during the Rio Earth Summit, the Peruvian government's sole focus was on the protection of Peru's biodiversity. Climate change, on the other hand, was viewed as a concern for wealthy industrial powers, and of little relevance to Peru and other countries at similar stages of their economic development. As Pulgar-Vidal went on to write, 'what a difference 25 years makes'.

Now, the connections between the health of the climate, the success of biodiversity and Earth's ecosystems and our health, wealth and happiness seem obvious to the point of common sense; the idea that this wasn't commonly understood sounds incredibly counterintuitive.

When the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released its landmark series of reports in March 2018, IPBES chair Sir Robert Watson summed up the need to think in systems. 'Land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change are three different faces of the same central challenge', he said. 'We cannot afford to tackle any one of these three threats in isolation – they each deserve the highest policy priority and must be addressed together.' ►



PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK. RAY HENNESSY

MAIN IMAGE
Global forests provide a vast range of ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, water filtration, habitat creation and nutrient recycling

RIGHT
Quantifying the value of biodiversity is a major challenge



only by bringing together the different parts of the system can we effect real change

LEFT
Oceans cover nearly 3/4 of the planet and provide many benefits – including up to half of our oxygen

BELOW
By working together, can we consign Earth Overshoot Day to the footnotes of history?

infrastructure (produced capital) and its educated, skilled and knowledgeable workforce, coupled with its societal networks and relationships (human, social and intellectual capital) alongside foreign assets. The insight here is that traditional wealth creation is often not wealth creation at all. It is often only the substitution of one form of capital for another, and disproportionately the liquidation of natural capital in order to create financial capital.

Natural capital underpins all other forms of capital, which is why it has been an important place to start. But organisations must understand the ways in which they impact and depend on all of the capitals if they are to make truly informed decisions that benefit societies and the natural world, alongside businesses and economies. Only by adopting one integrated approach to decision-making, which takes into account the wider relationships between all capitals, can we look forward to a future in which we thrive in every possible way – and with any luck consign Earth Overshoot Day to the footnotes of history. ■

MATCHMAKING FOR A SHARED VISION

A systems approach is embedded in the DNA of the Natural Capital Coalition. The Coalition brings together 280+ organisations (and engages many thousands more) which together represent all sectors of society.

These organisations fall into seven broad groups or ‘worlds’: business, finance, conservation and civil society, government and policy, science and academia, standard setters and disclosure and membership organisations.

The organisations have united under the vision of a world that conserves and enhances natural capital, a shared belief that we can do more together than we can do alone and an understanding that only by bringing together the different parts of the system can we effect real change.

The Coalition team provides an overview of work in the natural capital space, highlighting connections, engaging in outreach and facilitating expert advice for the Coalition community. It’s able to act as matchmaker to ensure that different parts of the system are talking to one another, and that the best organisations and experts are working together to achieve a shared vision.

While the Natural Capital Coalition was primarily set up to focus on embedding natural capital assessments in the private sector, its thinking in this area has evolved and its focus has broadened.

The Coalition is now also working to develop and encourage an ‘enabling environment’ for natural capital approaches. This will provide the context needed to support the transition to a society in which natural capital approaches are an integral part of public and private decision-making.

The involvement of all of the Coalition’s seven worlds is crucial to achieving an enabling environment, but the Coalition’s future focus will be on engaging the business, finance, government and policy-making communities.

In the coming months, the Coalition will also be announcing a new Regional Platform programme, which will be another way in which it is able to create networks and address systems issues.

BEYOND GDP

There has recently been an international push, led most notably by the UN and the World Bank, to move ‘beyond GDP’ – a country’s income – when we consider a nation’s true wealth. A country’s wealth is broadly categorised as the collective value of its economic wealth and income (financial capital), its natural resources and the services that flow from them (natural capital and ecosystem services), its material goods and

FIND OUT MORE

- Information about the Natural Capital Coalition is at naturalcapitalcoalition.org
- More on Earth Overshoot Day is at overshootday.org
- Information about Natural Capital Coalition projects is at naturalcapitalcoalition.org/projects

‘Land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change are three different faces of the same central challenge’



PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK, CHRIS BARBALIS

B Corp certification has been compared with the Fairtrade stamp of approval on coffee and the LEED rating for green buildings. It's one of the ways conscious businesses can show their customers they're making a positive impact on both people and planet.

B Lab certifies businesses as B Corporations (or 'B Corps') when they meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Globally there are more than 2,500 Certified B Corps, including Patagonia, Pukka Herbs and Ella's Kitchen.

The first half of 2018 has seen a large-scale embrace of purpose as the future of business. Danone, a multinational food company that generated sales of more than €24bn in 2017, owns the world's largest B Corp, Danone North America. Other large public companies, including Campbell's, Procter and Gamble and Unilever, are now owners of B Corp subsidiaries.

THE GOLD STANDARD

The use of business as a force for good has ready leaders in the companies honoured as 2018 Best For The World honourees. These businesses are proving that competing not only to be best *in* the world but best *for* the world is a winning strategy, and they're leading the way for more mainstream businesses.

BEST FOR THE WORLD

**44 UK companies have ranked
in the top 10% of B Corps
using business as a
force for good**



In June, 44 for-profit UK companies were recognised for creating an extraordinary positive impact, based on a comprehensive independent assessment administered by the non-profit B Lab.

The Best For The World honours list recognises those who earned scores in the top 10% of all certified B Corps, and that set the gold standard for companies using business as a force for good.

UK honourees include Green Element Limited (for commitment to the environment, see below) and Wholegrain Digital (for commitment to workers, see next page).

Scores are measured via the B Impact Assessment, which looks in detail at a company's impact on workers, community, customers and the environment. To certify as B Corps, companies must complete the full assessment and have their answers verified by B Lab. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- More about how and why to become a certified B Corp is at bcorporation.uk/become-a-b-corp
- See what B Corps have signed up to at bcorporation.uk/what-are-b-corps/the-b-corp-declaration
- Search for B Corps in different sectors at bcorporation.uk/community/find-a-b-corp



**How running a
sustainable business
will save you money**

These days, if a business doesn't have sustainability information on its website then it hasn't kept up with the times. Today's customers want to know where their money's going and they aren't afraid to vote with their feet if a company's eco credentials don't cut it.

But businesses aren't just supplying to demand: they've found that simple changes – such as switching to renewables, cleaning up their supply chains and operating fairly and transparently – are also good for their bottom line.

Environmental management consultancy Green Element helps companies – big and small – to change from the inside and reap the rewards. 'We've found that companies with social, community and environmental responsibility at the core of their operations have achieved advantages in the marketplace, lower rates of attrition amongst employees and clients, increased productivity and motivation of staff and, consequently, increased profits', says William Richardson, founder and managing director of Green Element. 'All of this while making a positive difference to the lives of both stakeholders and the community.'

Carbon footprinting, environmental management, energy management and procurement and corporate

responsibility are just some of the topics Green Element can advise on. The team has also created a podcast that features interviews with people making great progress in ethical business, and runs a free Facebook community with lots of advice, guidance, networking and support.

Green Element offers a Small Business Package that includes an audit of current activities, suggestions for improvements and cost savings and educational tools for the team. It also works with larger organisations to help them implement an Environmental Management System and work towards ISO certification and other statutory requirements.

As a certified B Corp, Green Element can also offer advice to clients who are interested in joining the network of 150 UK organisations that are using business as a force for good. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Join Green Element's free Facebook community at facebook.com/groups/GreenElement
- More about Green Element's Small Business Package is at greenelement.co.uk/small-business-package
- To find out how you can become a more green, responsible and sustainable business, call Green Element on 020 7096 0054



Cleaning up the internet

How much carbon does your website generate?
This new calculator will show you

The exponential growth of online business – in the UK and elsewhere – isn't limited to retail: the vast majority of UK businesses have an online presence, whether it's a basic website or an entirely digital operation with a fully integrated social media strategy.

Going digital should be great news for the planet: it means less 'stuff' in the world and gives people the freedom to work from any location that has wifi. When a whole team or business goes digital, it creates huge opportunities: in an ideal world, the vacation of power-hungry offices would allow the space to be retrofitted and converted into new housing or more efficient work hubs.

But the online world isn't as clean as it appears. The internet as a whole has roughly the same emissions as global aviation, but it's growing much faster and could reach 3.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions within 10 years. It uses more energy each year than the whole of the UK – a staggering 416.2TWh. That amount of electricity production accounts for 2% of global CO2 emissions, equivalent to the sixth-highest polluting country in the world – Germany.

SHRINKING THE FOOTPRINT

Despite all best intentions, web-based businesses around the globe are finding they're now part of one of the world's most polluting industries.



Wholegrain Digital has pledged to slash 20% off the CO2 per page view of all clients' new websites



MAIN IMAGE
By 2026, all Wholegrain Digital's clients' websites will be switched to servers powered by renewables

ABOVE
The Carbon Calculator reveals the emissions of any web page or website

BOTTOM-LEFT
The Wholegrain Digital team

The average size of a webpage is currently 2.9MB, over 30 times the size of the average web page in 2003. Considering the transmission of 1GB of data uses an estimated 5kWh of electricity, designers and developers could have a huge impact on emissions by designing more efficient websites.

Wholegrain Digital is doing just that. The B Corp certified company designs WordPress sites that help to drive positive change. Wholegrain Digital has set itself a goal to reduce carbon emissions from operations (CO2/£ revenue) by at least 10% every year, and become a truly zero carbon business by 2026. But as a client, what's in it for you?

As well as being a green company, Wholegrain Digital actively promotes green web design – and screens potential clients to ensure their work is making a positive impact. If you meet the criteria, you'll benefit from some incredible new technology that might just save the world.

Wholegrain Digital has pledged to switch all its clients' websites to web hosts powered by renewable sources by 2026. But the really interesting part is the company's commitment to reducing the CO2/page view of all new websites by 20%, compared with the previous website or nearest competitor (whichever has lower emissions).

THE CARBON CALCULATOR

You can't manage what you can't measure, and until recently it hasn't been possible to get a grip on the real impact of specific websites or individual web pages. Now that's all changed; Wholegrain Digital has created a tool that calculates a site's carbon emissions. It works on any website, and has revealed a huge spectrum of efficiency.

So far, the most efficient website tested is MuskFoundation.org, which is the brutally bare bones website for Elon and Kimbal Musk's non-profit foundation. It comes in at 0.009 grams of CO2 per page view.

The least efficient website tested to date is www.royal.uk, which has a staggering 21.57 grams – more than the weight of a wedding ring – of CO2 per page view. The emissions would have stacked up following public interest in Meghan and Harry's wedding on 19 May.

As well as working in shared office space powered by renewables and hosting all its own websites on servers that use 100% renewable energy, Wholegrain Digital uses secondhand equipment where available and donates used computers to

CLEAN UP YOUR WEBSITE

Using native fonts and SVG icons and avoiding photos, videos and unnecessary scripts will all help lower your website's emissions. Other tips include:

- Don't autoplay videos
- Compress images using a tool like TinyPNG
- Use caching to reduce server load
- Lazy load content that's out of sight
- Delete unused files, pages and websites
- If in doubt, leave it out

Computers 4 Africa. It applies a voluntary tax of £30/tonne CO2e and uses the money to support the work of SolarAid.

1% FOR THE PLANET

As a member of 1% for the Planet, the company also gives 1% of its annual sales to support non-profits focused on the environment. Members of this global network of businesses, non-profits and individuals – which has together given more than \$175m back to the environment – are able to select non-profit partners and provide financial donations, volunteer time and other in-kind donations directly, offering the long-term support that helps the organisations to deliver greater impact.

The non-profits Wholegrain Digital chose to support through 1% for the Planet are B Lab, 10:10 Climate Action and Do Nation. B Lab is the non-profit organisation that serves B Corporation, and 10:10 is a small, London-based charity that runs positive, practical projects with a focus on tackling climate change at local community level, which in turn acts as a catalyst for bigger changes.

Do Nation is a fellow B Corporation; its goal is to start a movement by encouraging people to change their behaviours and help to create a better world. Its online pledging platform is easy to use and engage with as it breaks big commitments down into smaller and more manageable pledges. Powered by years of research around behaviour change, Do Nation's platform encourages people to make small and sustainable short-term changes, and many keep their new habits for the long term.

B THE CHANGE

Like all B Corps, Wholegrain Digital is using business as a force for good; it has committed to a Declaration of Interdependence, which includes a pledge to aspire to do no harm and benefit all through its products, practices and profits.

Wherever your website sits on the spectrum of efficiency, a few simple tips (see above) can help you clean up your online presence. We all want good companies to attract traffic and business, but thanks to Wholegrain Digital there's now a way to do it without leaving a trail of emissions behind you. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Try out the carbon calculator at [websitecarbon.com](https://www.websitecarbon.com)
- View Wholegrain Digital's work at [wholegraindigital.com/work](https://www.wholegraindigital.com/work)
- Call 020 7112 8240 to enquire about a new website build

The free green upgrade

Octopus Energy has switched all its customers to 100% renewable electricity (and hasn't charged them for it)

Octopus Energy started with the ambition of kicking a tired energy market up the backside by offering customers cheaper, greener energy. As well as providing a 100% green tariff, for the last two years the challenger energy supplier has offered the option of cheap 'standard' tariffs, in which over two-thirds of the energy is renewable. Now Octopus has decided to go all the way.

All the supplier's tariffs provide 100% renewable electricity, at no additional cost to customers. Every unit of electricity used is matched with a renewable certificate for the same amount.

WHAT IS '100% RENEWABLE'?

There are different ways of 'being green'. When Octopus Energy launched, the team 'agonised over how best to bring cheaper, greener energy to as many people as possible'. The main challenge was combating the perception of green energy as a niche, often expensive, product. Hitting that sweet spot between 'good for the planet' and 'good for the wallet' is crucial for the mainstream viability of renewable energy.

Bearing this in mind, the first step on Octopus Energy's journey is to use the government's REGO (Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin) scheme. For every megawatt of electricity its customers use, Octopus purchases a certificate that covers the same amount, ensuring that customers' demand on the National Grid is only met by renewably generated sources.

Now, this isn't quite the ideal solution – in an often obfuscating industry, Octopus is committed to transparency and openly acknowledges that REGO certificates have critics. Some argue that without real-time matching from generation to consumption, these certificates leave too much wiggle room for suppliers to get out of their 100% green commitments. But Octopus believes it's a good first step on the journey, because it gets people used to the idea that you can go green without breaking the bank.

So REGOs are step one. Next, Octopus is hoping to enter into Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), contracting directly with solar farms to offer localised, real-time matching of electricity generation with electricity use. This would guarantee every electron powering Octopus Energy customers' homes is generated from renewables like the sun, wind or organic decomposition. While buying REGOs offers some funding for renewable energy generation (and every investment is positive), PPAs offer real potential to nurture renewable generation.



In the long term, the aim is to supply all customers' energy from source; the goal is for Octopus Energy to build its own renewables farms and forge a deeper connection with its renewables suppliers.

Octopus Energy has already made a good start on this long-term plan: its main backer, Octopus Group, is the UK's biggest investor in large-scale solar (meaning generation sites not on rooftops) and has over 150 sites across the UK. Though Octopus Energy doesn't own these sites directly, the solar farms are central to its relationship with Octopus Group.

The wheels are also turning on some proprietary Octopus Energy sites; the supplier is already in talks to make its own renewable farms become a reality.



Octopus Energy is forging ahead with the complete redefinition of how we use energy in the UK. Moving to 100% green electricity is just step one. I look forward to the day we commission our very own Octopus Energy site. We're ambitious. We're dedicated to the future of the planet. And we will lead the green revolution in the very near future.'

Greg Jackson, founder of Octopus Energy

RENEWABLE WORLD

Funding from Octopus Energy's carbon offsetting will now go towards Renewable World's Global Programme. The impact of the programme and its projects, such as the two below, will be reported directly to customers.

Gita Thapa



Gita Thapa lives in a family of eight in the semi-urban Nepalese region of Bhaitari, where the community's women are responsible for holding down the fort at home. This involves – but is by no means limited to – multiple daily treks up and down steep, hazardous slopes to collect water.

In 2017, Renewable World installed a solar-powered watering system in Gita's village to lift water from the source to the community. Following the installation, Gita and her family have been saved from serious health risks as well as hours of exhausting treks.

Gita's put her extra time to good use: after leasing some land, she has put into practice the agricultural trainings provided as a part of the project, and now grows high-value vegetable crops to sell at the local market.

Thanks to this extra income source, she is now able to enjoy social time and rest. 'Life has become easier now', she says.

Charles Otieno



In the Kenyan village of Ng'ore, almost all local income and livelihood is linked to fishing on the nearby Lake Victoria. A fisherman's income is meagre and the day-to-day work is dangerous; before Renewable World got involved, the community had no electricity and instead relied on dangerous kerosene lamps.

Despite their toxic fumes and potential for fires and explosions, these lamps were the only option for lighting homes and going out on evening fishing ventures. Charles Otieno is one Ng'ore local whose livelihood depended on fishing under these circumstances.

In 2015, Renewable World installed a solar microgrid in Ng'ore, providing electricity to the community for the first time. Charles retrained as the area technician, which provided a steady income, then used his home energy supply to set up a business charging mobile phones and powering a small community cinema. The proceeds have now been invested in a motorbike, with which Charles is running a taxi service for Ng'ore residents.

'Before the energy hub came, I was a fisherman', Charles said. 'Since it came I got electricity, and I now run a small business... This has changed my life.'

We're talking 'longer term', but Octopus Energy's first few years in operation have been characterised by speedy, massive growth (from 0 to nearly 250,000 customers in its first two years) – and nothing's slowed the supplier down yet.

WHAT ABOUT GAS?

You're probably thinking this all sounds great as far as electricity goes, but what about gas?

As part of Octopus Energy's drive to offer a tariff that's both renewable and cheap, the supplier has avoided 'green' gas in favour of carbon offsetting natural gas – a cost effective, and arguably equally green, solution.

For as long as Octopus has been taking on customers, it has offered a Super Green Octopus tariff that commits to fully carbon offset customers' natural gas usage.

In the past two years, customers on the Super Green Octopus tariff have helped to protect an area of the Amazon rainforest larger than Liechtenstein, thanks to the supplier's partnership with the Brazilian Florestal Santa Maria project.

As well as putting a stop to logging and deforestation in the area, the partnership has helped to create jobs in 15 local

Turn to page 7 to find out why Octopus Energy is one of our Top 5 Summer Switches

communities, in various sectors ranging from eco-tourism to sustainable forestry.

Last year, however, one of Octopus Energy's customers introduced the supplier to a charity they worked with – Renewable World. This small, Brighton-based organisation tackles poverty using renewable energy, working to improve incomes, health and education in the developing world by introducing tech that's driven by renewable energy.

Renewable World's projects evolve according to the needs of the particular community, but each one centres on returning agency to locals by installing local renewable energy hubs.

As well as Gita and Charles' stories above, you can find lots more information about the work Renewable World does on its website (see below). ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Find out how much you could save by switching to a renewable tariff at mygreencollective.com
- More about Renewable World is at renewable-world.org
- See what makes Octopus Energy a new breed of energy supplier at <https://octopus.energy/>

Golda Schultz has been described as ‘a newcomer who simply has everything’. According to critics, ‘she can spin off a line of pure silk with ease’, has a voice that’s ‘big, clear, technically stupendously perfect’ and is able to convey ‘a sparkling personality, with a ready sense of humour.’ So what’s the secret to this South African star’s success?

DANCE AND JOY

We’ve heard Golda’s preparation involves dance and yoga: she’s even been caught doing her favourite asana, the Peaceful Warrior, atop a grand piano.

On 07 August Golda will perform Brahms’s *A German Requiem* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra; is she planning to dance in her dressing room at the Royal Albert Hall? ‘Oh gosh, yes!’, she tells us. ‘Dancing must always happen. It gets me out of my head and into my body. It wakes up my soul and makes me less self conscious, but more aware of my body. It’s a great way to check in with yourself. Dancing is also a true expression of joy flowing from the body. Why not do it?’

Joy is central to Golda’s performances; before stepping on stage she focuses on creating a joyful experience – for the orchestra, the audience and the performers – and an open space in which the audience can emotionally engage with the moment.

‘I think people want to connect’, Golda tells us. ‘We are programmed for it. An audience is just as likely to have a profound experience with any other performer as long as there is something to connect to. The performer’s passion for the music, the joy, the profound musicality – those are the things that connect. Me jumping around in my dressing room to ‘Eye of the Tiger’ won’t matter to them, unless it opens my heart space and allows me to give a heartfelt performance. Then and only then do these things matter.’

WHERE THE MAGIC HAPPENS

Alongside an open heart, an active and ready core is vital for a killer performance; as Golda puts it, that’s ‘where the magic happens’.

‘Singing is a full-contact sport and as such you need your core – the centre of the powerhouse – to be at attention’, she tells us. ‘That doesn’t mean holding tension, but rather keeping it at active rest so that it can be engaged for when you really need to carry your sound into a hall.’

For Golda, the act of singing is like starting a car; you have to warm it up a bit. ‘You can’t just sing from nothing’, she tells us. ‘You have to activate your body and mind for the act of projection and for the



PHOTOGRAPHY GREGOR RÖHRIG

GOING FOR GOLDA

Gratitude, yoga and dance will prepare soprano Golda Schultz for her BBC Prom performance at the Royal Albert Hall

act of engagement, physical and mental. To do that you ‘build heat’, and get the blood flowing through carrying oxygen and nutrients to the parts that need it. You do that and your instrument will do all you want it to, because you are taking care of it!’

To build heat, Golda turns to yoga; the Warrior is Golda’s favourite asana because it helps to open the hips and chest. ‘I really enjoy Peaceful Warrior most because it helps me remember to be flexible in my body. Don’t hold energy in any one place. Let it flow through you. Focus on the grace of your body being able to move and create shapes. It’s a beautiful physical metaphor for singing. Don’t hold the sound or control it: let it flow from your core, vibrating over your chords and out into the world where it moves those who hear it.’

A GOLDEN RULE

Choosing to focus on gratitude and joy, while observing a ‘sometimes routine’ of yoga and dance, seems to have nailed it for Golda. ‘Soprano Golda

Schultz was frankly perfect in her recitatives and arias’, one critic remarked. ‘Her voice is creamy and smooth, with a brilliant finish and expert control... Schultz could not have been better.’

Golda goes out into the world with good intentions: she tries to be the best version of herself every time she steps on stage, and wants to remain conscious of the fact she’s a servant to the music and a mediator who allows the audience to have an experience.

Beyond that, what’s Golda’s best piece of advice for performers? ‘Know that this matters. This moment matters. To someone’, she tells us. ‘It might not be your best day, but for someone – in the audience, listening on the radio or watching on TV – this is the day that matters. So give all you have for that moment. Invest in that moment. Whatever bad notes come out or rhythms you forget count for naught if you remember that it’s the moment that matters and what you do with it. Always give your best and don’t expect perfection; give an audience honesty and they will feel it!’ ■

‘Don’t hold the sound or control it: let it flow from your core, vibrating over your chords and out into the world where it moves those who hear it.’

FIND OUT MORE

■ Golda Schultz will perform with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and BBC Symphony Chorus in the Brahms’s *A German Requiem* BBC Prom on 07 August (Royal Albert Hall, 19.30). This Prom will be broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and on BBC Four on 10 August. Book tickets at bbc.co.uk/proms

JOIN THE SUSTAINABLE SHOE REVOLUTION

Why are we here naturally nestling in these pages? We're super excited to introduce our brand new collection of affordable and excellent quality ethical shoes, using sustainable and Fair Trade materials – and we'd love you to try them.

My Green Pod readers are famous for helping build ethical brands, new ways of thinking and movements – so we decided to put our money where our mouth is and make you an introductory offer to experience the comfort of our shoes.

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Sven Segal, Po-Zu Founder

Next time you check a clothes label, look for more than just the care instructions

Telling tales in fashion

Jo Salter founded ethical clothes and accessories brand Where Does it Come From? in 2013 – just as the Rana Plaza factory collapsed in Bangladesh. ‘It felt to me as though we had swung too far away from ethics in fashion’, she tells us.

Each accessory and item of clothing from Where Does it Come From? carries a story about how it was made and who was involved. A code printed on the label lets shoppers trace it all the way back to the farm that grew the cotton. After entering the code online (see ‘Find out more’), the customer is shown a page with photos, videos and personal stories from the people who made their garment. ‘Some of the insights are fascinating’, Jo tells us, ‘from young women who use their wages to top up their mobiles to parents who fund their children’s education.’

After researching supply chains Jo selected khadi, an Indian cotton fabric popularised by Gandhi as part of Indian independence, for Where Does it Come From?’s large range of children’s clothing, unisex adults’ shirts and unique, versatile scarves.

Jo recently set up a second supply chain in Africa, in partnership with the charity Proudly Made in Africa. ‘Fabric and garment production has a rich social history in many cultures, such as khadi in India



and kikoi and kitenge in Africa’, Jo says. ‘In many areas skills and livelihoods have been lost because mass-produced imports have undercut local industry.’

The benefits of traceability work both ways: workers know their stories are being heard and valued and consumers know their clothing isn’t causing harm to people or planet. ‘Hopefully now the pendulum is heading back the right way’, Jo says. ‘Hearing of 1,138 people dying at Rana Plaza just to bring us cheap clothes has triggered a huge response, with calls for an end to the abuse of garment workers and transparency within the industry.’ ■

FIND OUT MORE

- View the full Where Does it Come From? range at wheredoesitcomefrom.co.uk
- Crowdfunding for the first African cotton tunics will begin soon. For details, visit wheredoesitcomefrom.co.uk/crowdfunding
- Trace your Where Does it Come From? garment at wheredoesitcomefrom.co.uk/trace



Turn to page 16 to find out why Where Does it Come From? Ethical Scarves are a My Green Pod Hero of the Season



little One man and his dog

Let your little ones grow with Yeo
Organic yogurts for kids

SHOT ON OUR FARM, FEATURING OUR
NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOUR, CHARLIE & MABEL THE DOG





Dot dot dot - dash dash dash - dot dot dot

It's possible that in the last 10 years our publications – the biggest ethical lifestyle magazines in Europe, including *National Geographic GREEN* and *MyGreenPod Magazine* – have reached tens of millions of people.

I've always done the things people have told me will never work. I don't let case studies and tried and tested routes to market dictate what I do; I simply trust what I am being guided to do and act on it.

On the journey I have had the pleasure of meeting the most incredible human beings who run and work in ethical businesses and organisations. As well as

becoming supporters of what we do, they've also become friends and part of Gaia's support team. I believe it's a network of Earth Ambassadors.

THE MASS WAKEUP

As well as having a handle on what needs to change, this network's doing something about it. We have joined the dots and made a dash to offer conscious products and services to consumers, knowing that they will help to deliver bigger, deeper changes.

We're in the middle of a huge shift, especially in human consciousness. Thanks in large part to

Sir David Attenborough's *Blue Planet II*, people are waking from the slumber and want to effect change. Yet most people stimulated in this way haven't quite joined the dots and made the dash. They may be having a plastic-free week, which in itself is a breakthrough, but when the dots are fully joined I've seen people become superheroes; they want to change the world they live in for ever.

PEACE AND LOVE

Massive socially impactful changes tend to come from one individual: one person who has managed to acknowledge and accept their superpowers (and we all have them – have you considered what yours is?) and become a superhero.

My favourite two Earth-walking change-makers are Gandhi and Bob Marley; one promoted equality with peace and the other diversity with love. Peace and love are two of the absolute finest qualities a human being can live.

This might all sound a bit hippy, but watch out because hippies are taking over!

You only have to look at the founders of Pukka to see hippies are now hip and driving the change needed in the global empire's board rooms.

So as you begin your journey back to peace and love, please be conscious about joining more dots – and then dash to make it happen. ■

●●● DOTS AND DASHES — — —

First we have to live the change, and then we can lead with confidence and joy by example.
How to join the dots goes a bit like this...

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ● Cut down on plastic because it's damaging our oceans. | — Now I can feel good about myself because I'm making conscious decisions that are helping my family, friends and the planet. | ● Eating organic food is good for my health and supports the soil it grows in. This is good for the planet, too! | ● Supporting a 100% renewable energy company would create new jobs and help the shift away from our dependence on dirty and finite fossil fuels. |
| ● Stop buying plastics all together – but that requires changing a lot of things I buy. Hmmm... | — I know, let's ask them to do the same! We can make a bigger impact by doing these things together. | ● Using clean, natural products means I'm not harming my skin or body; choosing eco-friendly cleaning products means I'm not damaging the Earth, water or seas. | |
| ● By changing what I buy, I can support companies doing good in my world and stop funding those that don't. | — But what else can I do? | | Now I can feel <i>really</i> good about myself: I've made a shift that was easy – but if everyone in the UK joined in, we would change the world. |

FIND OUT MORE

■ Jarvis is currently helping people to tap into their superhuman powers so they can help change the world. If you'd like to know more, visit jarvismith.com

LESSONS IN LOVE



David Geffen believes schools that teach love could see better academic results and pupil behaviour

Disruptive behaviour can devour valuable teaching time and cause distress for pupils and teachers alike. ‘Teachers cannot teach and pupils cannot learn in an environment where there is disruption and violence’, teachers’ union NASUWT states.

While every school should have its own behaviour policy, some teachers have said a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to discipline amounts to child abuse and is feeding a mental health crisis among pupils.

UNDERSTANDING PAIN

‘If people are misbehaving, it’s because they are in pain’, says David Geffen, founder of Loving Classroom. ‘It’s my belief that instead of adding to that pain, schools should take time to understand where it is coming from.’

It sounds great on paper, but with increased workloads and an unrelenting stream of targets to hit, is it realistic for teachers to take time out to teach love? From David’s experience as a mediator it’s not just desirable, it’s necessary.

Loving Classroom is an international schools programme for over-11s (with a junior version launching in September). It helps students cultivate ‘a lifetime of good relationships’ – with friends, family, peers and future colleagues. The bonds extend out to local communities, cultures and entire nations.

The programme draws on a wealth of diverse sources – from Dale Carnegie and Mahatma Gandhi to the Talmud and the US Army leadership programme. It started off as a series of workshops

designed to heal the divisions in Israeli society following the assassination of Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

Through Loving Classroom, teachers are trained to facilitate and develop eight lessons in their classroom: Respect, Compassion, Listening, Kindness, Gratitude, Love, Friendship and Care. ‘By accentuating the positive there’s a natural reduction in the negative’, David says, ‘such as bullying, anger, disruption, selfishness and apathy.’

IS LOVE BORING?

The team, which includes David and his wife Naomi plus Lilach Verman in the Middle East, Thulani Makhoba and Kyle Young in South Africa and Gemma Perkins in the UK, visits schools to help them to implement Loving Classroom and evaluate the programme’s impact.

While visiting a school in Manchester, David asked a class of 14-year-olds whether learning about love is ‘too gooey and boring’. A girl at the back spoke up. ‘I’d like to answer. Please understand, many of us here are growing up in unhappy homes, and this is the first time I’ve experienced what it’s like being in a loving group. This is more than a class. It’s life! It’s what it’s all about.’ David also asked the headteacher of a London private school whether he thought

the programme was relevant. ‘We need loving classrooms’, the headteacher said. ‘We don’t want our students going out to the world selfish, caring only for their own needs and desires. ‘Rather, we want them genuinely to care for both themselves and the rest of society.’

LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

Mahatma Gandhi was a pioneer of nonviolent communication and peaceful protest, yet he wasn’t able to stop the bloodshed during India’s struggle for independence. Charles Andrews, Gandhi’s friend and colleague, explained, ‘We did not produce enough leaders for the vast area of our struggle. This lack of leadership, more than anything else, led to the final outbreak of violence.’

For David, the same applies to schools: we need to produce enough teachers to educate the masses in the ways of caring dialogue, so that we can flourish and work things out together peacefully.

‘It’s my firm belief that ‘loving people’ is a skill that can be learned, like a sport, profession, driving or wine-tasting’, he says. ‘When people care for one another, they’ll want to – and find a way to – overcome any conflict. A flourishing 21st century can be built on ‘Loving People’, inspired by relationship education in schools worldwide.’ ■

FIND OUT MORE

- For more information, please email training@lovingclassroom.com
- For lesson plans and a video on how to facilitate Loving Classroom, visit lovingclassroom.com/head/training

JANEY LOVES

Natural beauty expert Janey Lee Grace on eating your nutrients – and applying them to your skin

In summer we're exposed to the elements: the sun's shining hard this year, meaning most of us are spending more time outside. No one wants to look like a leathery, weather-worn antique, so how do we keep the summer glow *and* care for our skin?

Remember we need good food – not just to eat, but for our skin. If you eat nutrient-dense foods and apply skincare that's rich in nutrients, you really will see the benefits.

NOURISH FROM THE OUTSIDE IN

It's hard to find anything more nutrient-packed than the Inlight Line Softener Intensive (£78, 28ml). It's been formulated to nourish and stimulate the skin's collagen production and regenerate deep lines, to leave your skin more radiant and smooth.

There are some seriously powerful ingredients inside, too: chlorophyll-rich spirulina and barley grass, plus argan and bitter cherry oils to help mop up free radicals. I met the founder, Dr Spiezia, who is passionate about his blends of botanical oils. This is a gorgeous product.



Sometimes in the summer all you need is a tiny bit of serum. Africology Anti-Oxidant Serum (£39, 30ml) is bursting with active ingredients like antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and peptides to give you a radiant complexion. It's great to use around the delicate eye area and the lips, especially in summer when that area can feel dry.

Give your eyes some definition with the excellent Lengthening Mascara from NATorigin (£15.95), with extracts of red algae, shea butter and jojoba oil. It's great for sensitive eyes and perfect for me as a contact lens wearer.

Many of us are lacking in vitamin D so it's important to catch some rays. But for the times you're exposed, try the 3 in 1 suncream, insect repellent and moisturiser from incognito (£24.99). It contains natural and organic ingredients and is free from DEET, irritants, parabens and SLS. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Find out more about each of these products – including where to buy them – in the Health and Beauty section at mygreenpod.com/heroes
- Discover more natural beauty tips at imperfectlynatural.com

FRUIT SMOOTHIE MASK

Aside from all the exotic ingredients in your natural skincare products, don't forget humble food. They do say don't put anything on your skin that you can't eat, so use leftovers wisely! In addition to drinking your green juice and fruit smoothies, treat your skin to a power-packed mask. Here's a quick and easy fix for dehydrated skin.

- 2 teaspoons of oatmeal
- 2 teaspoons of mashed strawberries (any fruit pulp will do)

Mix into a paste and massage into damp skin. Rinse off with warm water.



LEFT TO RIGHT
Africology Anti-Oxidant Serum;
incognito suncream insect repellent;
NATorigin Lengthening Mascara;
Inlight Intensive Line Softener



JANEY LOVES PLATINUM AWARDS

MyGreenPod.com is very proud to be a media sponsor of the Janey Loves Platinum Awards 2018. The awards showcase the best in natural and organic products and services in the health and beauty sector, in areas ranging from beauty and men's grooming to therapies and pets. For more about the awards, including categories and how to enter, visit platinumawards.co.uk





A PIONEER OF NATURAL LIVING

Rudolf Steiner was getting things right a century before conscious living became *a thing*

Today organic food, child-led education, natural beauty and holistic health are all things we take for granted – but they're in large part down to the vision of one man who bucked the trend a century ago.

Fusing intuitive understanding with scientific observation, the Austrian scientist-philosopher concluded that the health of the individual is entirely dependent on the wellbeing of the whole. By devoting his life to the unity of science and spirituality, he laid the foundations for an understanding of wellbeing that's thriving in modern Europe.

Dr Rudolf Steiner's philosophy – anthroposophy, or 'the wisdom of man' – extends to art, agriculture, beauty, business, education, medicine and more. A true pioneer for the 21st century, every modern business underpinned by anthroposophic principles seems custom-made for today's world and the risks it poses to the wellbeing of adults, children and Nature.

WHERE EDUCATION MEETS AGRICULTURE

You'll probably have heard of Steiner Waldorf schools, which are based on a system of education that provides a typically more creative and outdoor culture than schools that follow the national curriculum. They're popular with parents frustrated with today's increasingly exam-based education system, which arguably puts greater emphasis on a child's ability to pass tests than his or her inner development.

While the clue to its origin is in the name for this approach to education, a lesser known accolade equally attributed to Steiner is that he was a founding father of the organic agriculture movement in Europe. In 1924 Steiner delivered what was possibly the world's first organic agriculture course in Koberwitz, which he described as 'a course of lectures containing what there is to be said about agriculture from an anthroposophic point of view.'

While the terms 'biodynamic agriculture' and 'organic farming' appeared in the decades that followed, these lectures and the advice they contained constituted an early response to the proliferation of chemical or more industrialised agriculture. Steiner warned that the long-term use of soluble mineral fertilisers caused 'a loss in the nutritional value of the crops', and identified that 'cosmic vital forces' have a big impact on plants and animals.

In the case of both Steiner education and organic agriculture, their anthroposophic underpinnings require humans, society and Nature to be understood as a dynamic whole, in which our daily activities have a direct impact on the wider environment.

A NEW APPROACH TO MEDICINE

Armed with a map for making sense of the world, Steiner worked with medical doctors and chemists to create a new



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
Rudolf Steiner, a pioneer of conscious business; makeup artist Martina Lattanzi used Weleda at LFW; Weleda follows biodynamic principles at its gardens at Ilkeston, Derbyshire

approach to medicine that employed anthroposophic principles. 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 help. Together they developed a personal approach to healthcare that used 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 in 1921.

A BRAND FOR THE FUTURE

Today, the visionary understanding of the connection between humans and our wider environment couldn't be more relevant; in an era defined by cheap, chemical quick-fixes for our bodies, we're using more plastics than we can recycle and polluting our land, oceans and bodies with chemicals that are known carcinogens and hormone disruptors.

In contrast, Weleda operates by the principle that human health can only flourish if it's exposed to ingredients the body recognises and is able to process, in their most natural and

potent form. As you might expect, Weleda sees biodynamic farming as central to unlocking the innately healing and nourishing potential of the plants used in its products. The art of creating a diverse, balanced ecosystem with harmonised vital life forces is understood to boost the quality and potency of the yield and, therefore, the finished product.

FLOWER POWER

The anthroposophic approach to health and beauty is gaining new traction with two very different types of customer. Those looking for truly natural products are wising up to a beauty industry rife with greenwash, and they know the NATRUE stamp on Weleda products means they're certified natural or organic. Weleda's does-what-it-says-on-the-tin branding also helps confused shoppers navigate the sea of unnecessary products – particularly in the mother and baby category. The Calendula Baby Oil, Calendula Shampoo & Body Wash and Nappy Change Cream are go-to products for parents who don't want to plaster their children's skin with harsh chemicals and known irritants. They're packed with calendula – a natural antibacterial that was nicknamed 'Russian penicillin' during the first world war.

Those concerned more with efficacy than social or environmental impacts are equally fierce Weleda advocates. As Steiner observed over 100 years ago, untainted natural products *just work* – and as a result Weleda has bagged more awards than any trophy cabinet could handle. Weleda has scooped 40 UK awards already this year, 23 of which are for its Mother & Baby range. The company was crowned Best Fair Trade/Sustainable Brand at the Beauty Shortlist Awards 2018, where it also picked up two Editor's Choice Awards (Beauty Balm in Bronze and Wild Rose Smoothing Day Cream).

This hasn't been an unusual year; Weleda won an astounding 73 UK awards in 2017, including an Ethical Corporation Responsible Business Award, for Supplier Engagement of the Year, in recognition of the organic and fair trade farming partnerships the company has developed over the years.

SOURCING WITH RESPECT

The ways in which Weleda chooses to farm and source the natural ingredients that end up in our bathroom cabinets has a big impact; the company manufactures over 120 natural and organic cosmetics and more than 1,000 pharmaceuticals. Sustainable sourcing is crucial: over 1,000 natural ingredients go into these products each year.

Around 81% (over 2,000 tonnes) of all the plant ingredients used at Weleda are organic, making the company one of the world's largest buyers of organic raw materials. In addition to its long history of helping to boost organic and biodynamic farming, Weleda has recently become the first beauty brand in Europe – and only the second in the world – to receive certification from the Union of Ethical BioTrade (UEBT).

The UEBT is a non-profit that provides a globally recognised standard for the sustainable sourcing and use of raw materials. Weleda became a full member of the UEBT in 2011, and used its membership to reaffirm its traditional principles of ethical business practice, applying the UEBT standard to its raw material procurement.

UEBT values such as conservation, the sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair compensation of all partners in the supply chain correspond with Weleda's own long-standing principles. UEBT certification will help consumers see that they



DECODING THE LOGO

■ Designed by Rudolf Steiner in 1921, the Weleda symbol has three parts: a central, upright staff; a weaving spiral form and two interacting outer segments.

■ Mercury, messenger of the gods, inspired the design of the staff. It stands for truth and dependability and symbolises the connection between Heaven and Earth, the realms covered by the trusted messenger.

■ The weaving line represents the serpent, symbol of healing. In Greek mythology the god of medicine, Aesculapius, is shown gripping a serpent-entwined staff (the Caduceus, symbol of physicians). In myths and legends, the raised serpent challenges the divine nature of mankind to overcome its lower nature.

■ The outer lines, conceived by Rudolf Steiner, suggest an encompassing protection and social interaction. This principle conveys the ideas of giving and receiving, producing and consuming, physician and patient.

■ The Weleda symbol communicates the upright quality and integrity of its products, quality that reflects a therapeutic impulse and a knowledge of anthroposophy. The serpent suggests products that meet the challenges of modern life and the growing demand for purity and quality. The double figure represents an innovative concept in business: social awareness and responsibility.

are buying products from a company that treats people and biodiversity with respect. Watch out for the new logo, which will start to appear on Weleda packs from 2019.

CONSCIOUSNESS GETS A CULT FOLLOWING

Weleda has a cult following from those who want results. Its skincare is a favourite with many makeup artists who know they can rely on the products to suit even the most sensitive skin; it's used for the cast of feature films and on the sets of top TV drama productions, where the products meet all the demands of a high-definition industry.

One of the absolute must-have products is Weleda Skin Food, the not-so-secret industry beauty secret. It's a firm favourite with makeup artists as well as many high-profile celebrities, including Adele, Joss Stone, Rihanna, Anne-Marie, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Victoria Beckham and Julia Roberts. The enriching balm helps soothe and comfort skin that's battered by daily stresses – from poor diet to pollution. Miraculously it can perk up a pasty complexion suffering from lack of sleep, and top models including Erin O'Connor, Helena Christensen and Alexa Chung rely on Skin Food to counteract tired or jet-lagged skin.

The secret to this wonder balm? Extracts of organic chamomile, calendula and wild pansy, plus revitalising rosemary and pure essential oils. The real wonder is that the formula, which is uncannily fitting for today's modern lifestyles and the stresses our skin and bodies suffer as a result, hasn't changed since Skin Food launched in 1926.

In line with the company's holistic approach to wellbeing, Weleda is also a long-standing sponsor of The Model Zone at London Fashion Week. Tucked away from the media glare, this relaxing retreat provides a private haven where models can unwind between castings, fittings and shoots, eat healthily, drink plenty of fluids, take off their makeup and be pampered with organic skincare from Weleda. They also get holistic health consultations, complimentary body massages and Skin Food Facials, courtesy of the Weleda team.

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DNA

People often say that when something's right it just flows – and things are certainly flowing for Weleda. Today it operates in 52 countries across five continents, and has over 50 global sourcing partnerships and projects.

Sustainability is in this company's DNA, but it doesn't stop at Steiner. The company's environmental commitments cover everything from the ethical procurement of raw materials and biodiversity to sustainable packaging and the reduction of water, waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

The products are all made with conscious intent, as they were in Steiner's day, using natural ingredients grown and harvested with respect. They're still designed to kick-start the human body's natural ability to heal itself, without the synthetic chemicals that strip away our natural defences. Thankfully, Weleda has had the integrity to stick to the founding principles of a true pioneer of conscious business – and in doing so has evolved to become an inspirational brand for the 21st century. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- View the full range of Weleda products at weleda.co.uk
- More about Weleda's anthroposophic principles is at weleda.co.uk/about-us
- Find out why Weleda Skin Food is a MyGreenPod.com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes



Don't lose sleep over what's in
your mattress – go organic instead

SLEEP NATURALLY

Once upon a time, in a faraway land that didn't use chemical flame retardants, everything we slept on was made from natural materials. Industrialised farming changed that world completely, but a niche company in West Wales wants to give its customers a chance to experience the sort of sleep our ancestors enjoyed.

Rhiannon Rowley founded Abaca after 15 years in the mattress industry, where she witnessed the chemicals it used. We spend more time on our mattress than we do in any other single place, so Rhiannon used her experience to create natural mattresses that wouldn't expose us to chemicals or introduce pollutants to our bedrooms.

Organic mattresses are made with materials that have grown or been produced without the use of chemicals. Abaca's craftsmen take the best of them and create handmade mattresses from beautifully woven organic cotton, stuffed with wool – a natural flame retardant – and horsehair. The upper layers are pure organic Welsh wool, with no flammable synthetic fibres or chemicals.

Though most of today's mattresses are made by machines, their production used to be a craft – a skill that was passed on from generation to generation. When one person makes something for another, there is a connection that goes far beyond a commercial transaction. ■



I am always keen to remind people of the importance of wool and the effect that re-introducing it to all sorts of interior furnishings has further down the line for the farmers actually involved in producing the priceless animals that come up with this material. It is this virtuous circle that I am trying to encourage.'

HRH The Prince of Wales

FIND OUT MORE

- More about the benefits of organic mattresses is at abacaorganic.co.uk/faqs
- View Abaca's full range at abacaorganic.co.uk/product-category/mattresses
- Read customer testimonials at abacaorganic.co.uk/what-you-think



Turn to page 6 to see why Abaca Organic Mattress is a MyGreenPod.com Hero of the Season

Bare beards

A healthy beard doesn't require a complicated routine or products that cost the Earth – here's how to nail it naturally

You can end up spending a small fortune trying to find the right beard oil or balm – particularly if you have sensitive skin.

Putting the wrong ingredients on your face can cause spots, rashes, dryness, itchiness and flakiness – also known as beardruff. Alcohol and silicone can lead to a dry and brittle beard, and synthetic fragrances can also cause problems. But get it right and your beard can actually help to protect your skin from the dirt and oils that lead to irritations.

When Becky and Alan Fraser set up Original Beard Co (OBCo), they decided to use natural ingredients to minimise the risk of any kind of reaction. For ethical reasons, they also chose to keep everything vegan friendly. 'We found that we could develop a much smoother plant-based balm that avoids the problem of grainy lumps you get with many beeswax-based balms', Alan tells us.

Becky and Alan always offer case-by-case advice, according to the specific problem and the skin and hair types. As a general rule, they advise those with



shorter beards (less than 1 inch) to use OBCo balms and suggest those with longer beards use both the balms and oils to keep their beards looking tip-top.

With these products, a fantastic beard can be maintained with a five-minute daily routine. Wash the beard every second day with a beard-friendly shampoo, pat (don't rub!) dry with a soft towel and immediately apply a natural oil or balm while warm, as your pores are still open and the hair is most receptive to moisture. Then top up during the day with an oil or balm as required. If you straighten or style your beard with a hair-dryer, use its coolest setting to avoid heat damage. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- View the full range of oils and balms at originalbeard.co/collections/oils-balms
- Read Becky and Alan's story at originalbeard.co/pages/about-us
- The OBCo blog is at originalbeard.co/blogs/original-beard-co-blog



Turn to page 6 to find out why Original Beard Co is a MyGreenPod.com Hero of the Season



Howard Carter had a temperature of 104.1°F and was on his second visit to the Hospital for Tropical Diseases. 11 months earlier he'd visited Cochin in India – a low-risk area at a low-risk time of year. He'd used a Deet-based repellent recommended by a UK pharmacist, but had still been bitten by mosquitoes.

'The Deet obviously didn't work!', Howard tells us, 'probably because the mosquitoes were resistant to it!' Sure enough he'd contracted malaria – despite also being on anti-malarial drugs. 'Like the mosquitoes, the malaria parasite must have developed a resistance', he says.

Not to be deterred from travelling, Howard celebrated his recovery with an 11-day trip to Thailand – only to wind up with dengue fever, which is transmitted through *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes. Like many mosquito-borne diseases, the best cure for dengue is prevention; Howard's experience inspired him to develop a repellent that offered real protection without harming the environment.

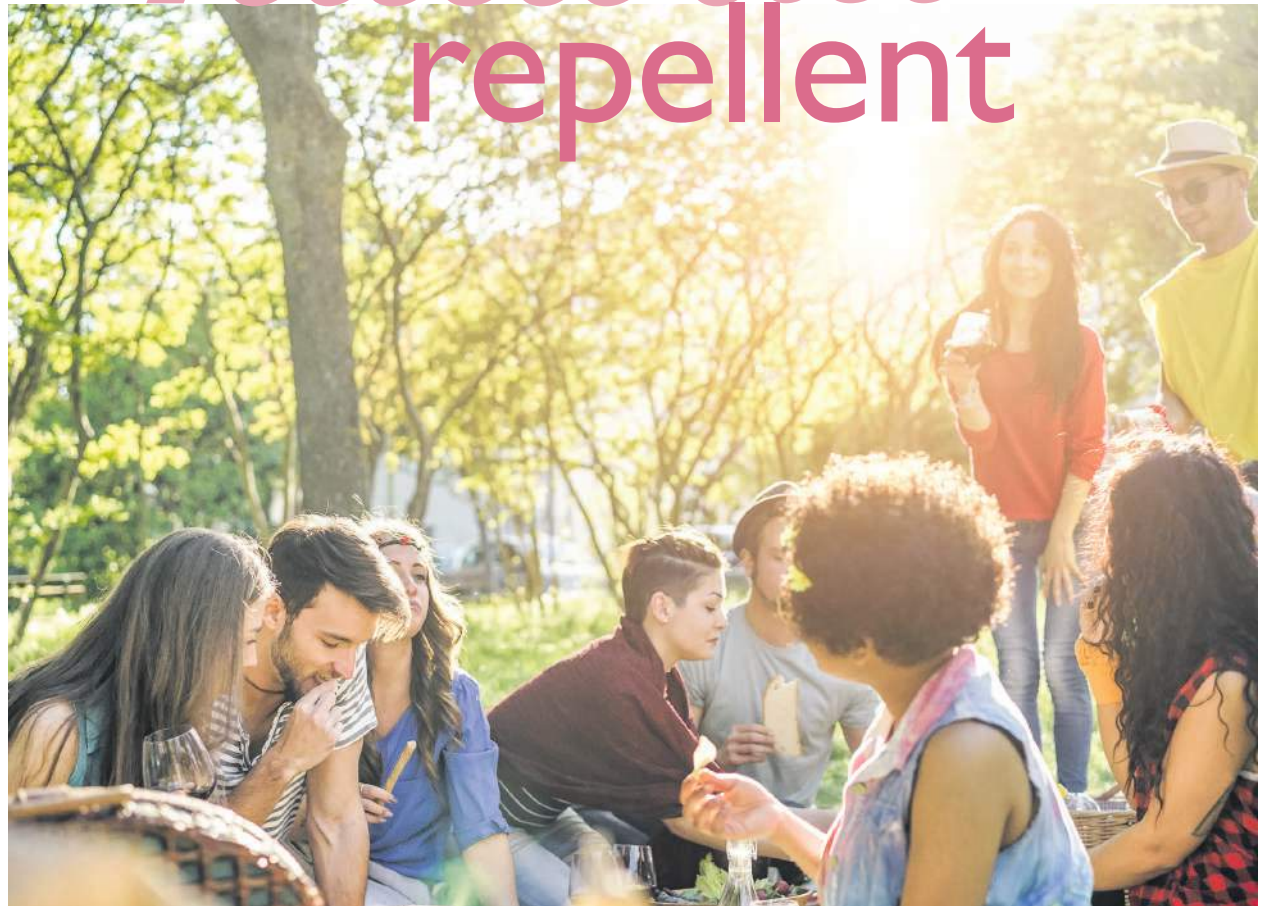
A PROTECTIVE CLOAK

'I'm not sure how many people would think of developing a repellent when potentially on their deathbed', Howard tells us. But that's what he did. The award-winning incognito® spray launched in 2007 and almost immediately garnered high-profile support from A-listers and even royalty. Due to its ethical foundations and business practice, the company went on to win the Queen's Award for Sustainable Development in 2015. It has also bagged a Janey Lee Grace Platinum Award for six consecutive years, plus a P.E.A. Award for Travel & Tourism and Treading Lightly awards from Waitrose.

The spray and roll-on repellent is effective against many different species of mosquito, as well as midges, sandflies, horseflies, ticks and lots of other insects. The active ingredient in incognito® products is PMD, which has been approved by NHS and Public Health England and recommended for high-risk areas for mosquito-borne diseases. To address the safety concerns associated with conventional repellents, it's also 100% natural.

Following the spray's success and with the help of the late Dr Nigel Hill (previously head of the Disease Control and Vector Biology Unit at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine), Howard also concocted a range of repellent washing accessories: a

The 100% *natural* repellent



Don't let bites and ticks get in the way of a good summer – make yourself naturally invisible to insects

hair and body wash, a citronella loofah and a luxury soap. 'What you wash in affects your attractiveness to mosquitoes and other insects', Howard explains.

Bacteria on the skin feed off the detritus around the pores and excrete a kairomone, a strong attractant to female mosquitoes. The loofah soap has microscopic hairs that gently remove the detritus while cleaning and conditioning the skin. The idea is to make yourself invisible to biting insects, instead of confusing them by jamming their odour receptors.

SUNCREAM THAT BITES BACK

This summer, incognito® launched another game changer: the Suncream Insect Repellent SPF30. This tri-action suncream, moisturiser and insect repellent is a non-greasy lotion that protects the skin against

both sun damage and ageing – all while providing camouflage from biting insects. It's suitable for all the family, including children from two years, thanks to what's inside. On top of all that, the packaging is one of the first to be made from renewably sourced sugarcane plastic; 4.6 kilos of carbon (CO₂) are removed from the atmosphere for every kilo of the plastic that is manufactured.

Like the incognito® spray and roll-on, the Suncream Insect Repellent SPF30 has been certified COSMOS Natural by the Soil Association. The ingredients have been rigorously tested; there is no GM and incognito® never tests on animals. A COSMOS Natural seal of approval also guarantees minimal harmful environmental effects and waste production.

Whether you're hitting the festival circuit or setting off for a summer holiday with the family, make sure you make yourself invisible to insects so your break's not blighted by bites. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- View the full incognito range at lessmosquito.com/collections/the-incognito-store
- More about how to avoid insect bites is at lessmosquito.com/pages/avoiding-insect-bites
- Advice on the best way to use incognito is at lessmosquito.com/pages/how-to-use-incognito-natural-insect-repellent-products



Turn to page 16 to find out why incognito® Insect Repellent Spray is a MyGreenPod.com Hero of the Season

A REVOLUTION IS ON OUR DOORSTEP



Helen Browning, chief executive of the Soil Association, explains why organic farming has the power to transform lives and the countryside

For some environmentalists, Brexit might be seen as an unmitigated disaster for Britain's natural world. A moment when regulation and 'red tape' (whatever that might mean) is torn up in favour of the market and a drive to squeeze every last drop from our environment, whatever the cost.

Yet as the government's environmental consultation 'Health and Harmony' closes, following responses from all sides of the debate, Britain has a once in a lifetime opportunity to fundamentally reshape farming, land use and the food sector.

PUBLIC MONEY FOR PUBLIC GOODS

One of the great opportunities lies in a strategy to which the government has, so far, committed: the 'public money for public goods' approach to future farm payments. While there remains a real lack of clarity in how and when this could be done – and how it would be paid for – it remains an exciting prospect for anyone who cares about healthy and sustainable food and farming.

So, what are the public 'goods' we might see from this revolution that stands on our doorstep?

The biggest win will be the ability to tackle many of the things we know British citizens care about: health, and the burden of diet-related disease on the NHS; reducing pesticides and antibiotics to very low levels; improving the welfare of farm animals; getting rid of the massive overuse of packaging, especially – but not only – plastic; reducing waste and improving the accessibility of fresh whole foods and reversing the biodiversity crash.

All the above can – and must – be achieved at the same time as enabling farmers, as the custodians of our land, to meet the challenge of climate change. Their land, through its soils and trees, presents a great opportunity to trap and store damaging carbon.

RADICAL CHANGE IS NEEDED

Decades of relying on pesticides, manufactured fertilisers and antibiotics should be put behind us. By transitioning away from reliance on artificial nitrogen fertiliser and fossil fuel-based inputs towards wholly renewable food production, our farmers can become net contributors to preventing climate change.



Any future system must also recognise the intersection of human health and farming; the health of our soils and natural environment is indivisible from human health. We need to invest in shortening food supply chains, to make fresh, affordable, whole foods more accessible to customers. Within any change to the dominant farming system, the production of foods for a healthier, more sustainable diet should be prioritised.

By making these changes, we will move to a more productive, resource-efficient and environment-enhancing food chain with human health at its heart.

THE POWER OF ORGANIC

Fortunately, we already have such a system up and running: organic farming. We don't have all the answers, but it's a good place to start. Since its



Buying organic supports the transition to an environment-enhancing food chain with human health at its heart

inception over 70 years ago, the Soil Association has shown the benefits of managing land with public goods in mind. By buying Soil Association-certified products, consumers can guarantee that they are receiving – and contributing to – these benefits.

Organic sales are up for the sixth consecutive year, and as public demand for cleaner products grows, organic food, farming and land management should no longer be the pinnacle to which we aspire, but the foundation upon which any future food and farming system is built.

Food and how we produce it has the power to transform lives. Now is the time for a powerful movement that could transform our countryside and provide plentiful, safe and healthy food. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Explore Soil Association-certified organic products at soilassociation.org/organic-living/buy-organic
- More on the benefits of organic is at soilassociation.org/organic-living/whyorganic
- View organic recipes at soilassociation.org/organic-living/organic-recipes



...AND IT HAS THE **POWER TO SAVE** OUR **DWINDLING WILDLIFE**



The plight of Britain's wildlife is making the headlines. Whether it's the staggering decline of farmland birds, that have crashed by over 50% since 1970, or the threat of extinction facing one in five British mammals, including the cherished red squirrel, there is mounting evidence of the alarming decline of our precious natural world.

Sadly, the demise of our wildlife isn't a new phenomenon. And despite growing scientific evidence of the threat to our natural world, many native species remain in sharp decline. Waiting any longer is not an option: we need to take action against these declines today.

FARMING WITH NATURE IN MIND

Our wildlife faces numerous pressures, from habitat loss to disease. But an issue historically less reported is the influence of more intensive farming methods.

A primary influence from farming is the use of pesticides. The evidence of the harm of pesticides to insects, including vital pollinators, is undeniable. Yet research shows that the number of different pesticides applied to individual crops is increasing. Our wildlife is being destroyed literally from the ground up.

Saving our wildlife also starts from the ground up. By changing the way we farm – using fewer pesticides, restoring our soils, re-establishing hedgerows and wildflower meadows – we can build a foundation that supports our wildlife, and allows the flora and fauna that define our view of the British countryside to thrive.

PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

We have an opportunity to make this happen. You probably know the Soil Association as a certifier of organic food, but you might not know it's also a charity that's doing amazing things. It works with people throughout the food chain – including farmers, retailers and government – to find solutions to the problems facing our natural world. It campaigns for a food and farming system that works with Nature, not against it – and for promotion of farming methods that are inherently wildlife friendly, like organic.

But to do this, The Soil Association relies on public support. It was public support that recently achieved a full outdoor-use ban on the three worst bee-harming neonicotinoid pesticides. Public support will also help to make sure banning neonics is only the start of a Nature-friendly approach to farming, and that they are not simply replaced with an alternative. We can help farmers step off the pesticide treadmill entirely.

WE CAN ALL PLAY OUR PART

Together we can make bold, ambitious steps towards a farming future where wildlife can thrive. Flourishing fields and hedgerows can once again be havens – not hazards – for bees, birds and other wildlife. And we can ensure future generations enjoy a rich and diverse natural world.

Be part of the solution: support wildlife-friendly farming with the Soil Association and help Nature to thrive. The plight of our wildlife is too important to wait. ■

FIND OUT MORE

■ Help to save wildlife by joining the Soil Association at soilassociation.org/savewildlife

Green farming

Could farming be used to mitigate climate change?

The UN predicts the world population will reach 8.6 billion in 2030, 9.8 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100. While most of us won't be around to experience life with 11.2 billion neighbours, we're likely to be around when 9 billion human mouths need to be fed.

Eating insects, going vegan, improving food storage and transportation and making more creative use of leftovers are just some of the countless ideas advocated as possible solutions. But for Richard Clothier, managing director at Wyke Farms, it has to start with animals and, crucially, farming.

'Much of the world's growing areas can only be cultivated through animals, particularly the more extensive mountainous or dry, semi-desert regions', he tells us. 'A lot of the growth in population and affluence will be in Asia and Africa. 300 million Indians will join the middle classes in the next 10 years; they will eat more meat and dairy products, consume more energy and use more resources.'

A SILVER BULLET?

For Richard, the only way feasible way we'll be able to thrive as a community of 9 billion is by accepting that diets containing meat and dairy are here to stay, and make sure farming 'does what it can to mitigate climate change wherever possible, with minimal use of the Earth's resources.' Telling everyone to ride a bike won't cut pollution, he says, but developing electric cars could be the silver bullet that does. In the same way, farming needs to craft the silver bullet



Richard Clothier, managing director at Wyke Farms, promotes 'practical environmentalism'

that will reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. 'We have to do what we can', he says.

Richard is already doing a lot; he pursues what he calls 'practical environmentalism' at Wyke Farms, the 150-year-old family farm in the heart of Somerset's Brue Valley. The entire working farm is powered by solar and biogas generated from otherwise useless farm and dairy waste.

NATURAL FERTILISERS

Richard's commitment to Wyke Farms' '100% Green' project has been rewarded: it's 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, while making use of the 75,000 tonnes of waste that would otherwise be carried away each year. Local farmers who use the digestate from Wyke Farms' biogas plant also save 1.5m kilos of CO₂ annually.

For Richard, using anaerobic digestion (AD) to remove methane from all farm slurry, manure and waste is a no-brainer: it stops the methane emissions from breaking down in the fields and conveniently

generates heat and green electricity as by-products. 'We need to be using the waste from AD and using the latest precision farming methods to allow this natural fertiliser to replace artificial nitrogen, which in environmental terms is like spreading crude oil on the land', Richard tells us.

AN ENERGY REVOLUTION

When it comes to minimising resources, Richard believes farmers should be encouraged to invest in solar panels, so that they can be part of an energy revolution that also helps boost their incomes.

All dairy farms need to cool milk to 2-3°C as quickly as possible; Richard makes a point of showing visiting farmers the set-up at Wyke, where the tank of iced water used to get the milk's temperature down is powered by solar panels on the barn roof.

'Lots of farmers have gone off to do the same on their own land', Richard says. 'Even if they've only got space for a small array, they'll save money because they'll use all the energy that they generate.'

As far as Richard's practical environmentalism goes, solar panels and AD plants are just the start. He believes water should be recovered wherever possible, cows' diets should be changed to reduce natural methane emissions and grazing should be promoted over cultivated corn crops.

Essentially, the approach is an invitation to return to farming as it always used to be; if looking to the past will provide solutions for the future, then it wouldn't be the first time – and it won't be the last. ■



FIND OUT MORE

- More about Wyke Farms' 100% Green initiative is at wykefarms.com/green
- Information about Wyke's Sustainable Energy Visitor Centre is at wykefarms.com/green/visitors-center
- More about the family farm's history in Somerset is at wykefarms.com/our-family



With festival season now in full swing, Sarah Mead from Yeo Valley explains how – with husband Tim – she came to throw the most spectacular organic feast the UK has to offer

Festival fever is definitely gripping the Valley as we gear up for Valley Fest 2018. At Yeo Valley and Holt Farms, we're massive supporters of this small-but-perfectly-formed festival.

My husband Tim and I first discovered it by chance, in all honesty. Our friends Jarvis and Katie were visiting from Brighton five years ago, and we were looking for somewhere to take them. We ended up going to this tiny little festival overlooking Chew Valley Lake, the next valley along from us, here in North Somerset. It was so charming and such fun. We had a blast!

WHY WE DITCHED GLASTO

At the time we were involved with the much larger Glastonbury Festival. But when we met Luke Hassel, the ball of energy who started Valley Fest (then known as Mini V), we decided to ditch Glasto in favour of helping turn this happy, off-beat gathering into the go-to festival for lovers of organic food and good music. At least that's the plan!

Why did we want to do it? Simple, really; we believe in bringing people together for a foot-stomping good time. We love a party and we love good organic food! We're so family orientated at Yeo Valley that putting on a festival for your family and friends, as well as ours, made perfect sense.



Yeo Valley's Sarah and Tim Mead have turned Valley Fest into the go-to family festival – whatever your age

WHAT'S ON

This year is going to be bigger and better than last. The music lineup sees Alabama's St Paul & The Broken Bones bring their energetic southern soul revival extravaganza to the main stage. Trust me, you won't want to miss that.

We've also added the breathtaking Rae Morris to the lineup, which I'm super-excited about – she's awesome! Also confirmed are Yola Cater, Oh My God! It's the Church and Dirty Bourbon River Show. If you haven't heard of these acts, I encourage you to get to know them – they're all sensational.

Valley Fest is a veritable wonderland for children. We don't have a 'kids' area' because there's fun

for them round every corner. They can head over to Hogsnoarts Farm Academy to learn more about farming life, do some veg picking with The Community Farm, horse around on the vintage tractors, meet the farm animals and enjoy the falconry displays. There's also an arts and crafts tent, a film tent, pop-up theatrical entertainment, Junior Jungle and bonkers activities galore in The Yard.

Good food will accompany the good times, so the Yeo Valley Canteen chefs will be on hand all weekend serving up top-notch organic fodder to keep revellers fuelled throughout the day and evening.

It's all happening on 03-05 August, and our whole family is going to be there. There really is so much going on that it's impossible to remember it all. All the details can be found on the website (valleyfest.co.uk).

This year, Valley Fest is supporting the Teenage Cancer Trust and we're really hoping to make, at the very least, a small difference to some of the young people who are suffering. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- Get weekend and day tickets at valleyfest.co.uk/tickets
- View the full lineup at valleyfest.co.uk/line-up
- More about the story behind Valley Fest is at valleyfest.co.uk/about

Reusable coffee cups
are the way forward –
but are they all
created equal?

PICKING AN ECO COFFEE CUP

Each day we bin up to 7m disposable coffee cups. Vast, non-renewable resources are required to create, deliver and dispose of single-use cups that are used for minutes but last for centuries.

From Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall to Sir David Attenborough, some of our national treasures have helped raise public awareness of the single-use plastics problem and mobilise consumers to demand change. We're a nation of coffee lovers, but we're also a society that's decided to reject single-use plastics.

THE RISE OF THE ECO CUP

Reusable coffee cups have been around for some time, but thanks to public demand they're now a lot more common. 'Eco' cups have been launched in every colour of the rainbow, using materials ranging from BPA-free plastic to glass, porcelain and bamboo.

Reusing a coffee cup is better than creating single-use waste or recycling – but, like any product, each eco coffee cup leaves its own footprint.

Plastic is a very common component of reusable coffee cups – and we all know the issues with that – and while glass can be reused it's not always the best option when you're on the go. Bamboo makes use of

a natural material, but unfortunately many of these cups are formed using a plastic, like melamine.

Richard Milton, founder of Huskup, set out to find an alternative solution. 'As demand grows', he tells us, 'we also needed a better solution to make sure we don't replace the 2.5bn takeaway cups that are discarded each year in Britain with reusable coffee cups that use yet more plastic – it doesn't seem right to have plastic as part of the solution.'

A PLASTIC-FREE SOLUTION

Huskup came to market earlier this year. It's a reusable coffee cup made from one of the world's most abundant food waste materials: the humble rice husk. The Huskup doesn't contain any plastic and can fully biodegrade at the end of its life. You can reheat coffee in your Huskup without any fear of nasty chemicals leaching into your drink.

The cups are microwave and dishwasher safe, and tough enough to withstand temperatures of -30°C to 120°C. They're not indestructible, but if you look after your Huskup it should last for years. It's certified to European compostability standards (EN 13432); if, at the end of its useful life, it should ever get into the land or sea, it won't break down into microplastics or get into the food chain.

By taking natural agricultural waste from earth to earth, the Huskup addresses our takeaway cup crises without the drawbacks associated with some other reusable cups. 'If we can avoid plastic in the first place', Richard explains, 'then we won't have the problems associated with it.'

SHAKING THINGS UP

Around 125m tonnes of rice husks are produced globally each year; when they're used as a material they're diverted from the incinerator, where they create carbon and sulphur dioxide. 'Each cup makes a contribution to the environment before it ever even sees an espresso', Richard says.

On top of the green credentials, Richard felt it was important for the Huskup to be a desirable, unique product that people would love. To help engagement and reuse, Huskup teamed up with independent artists for its first 12 designs. 'Illustrators Donna Sarah and Natasha Kirby were really into the concept from the off', Richard tells us. 'They both share our environmental principles and, like us, they are independent and original. We're all looking to shake things up in our own way!'

The technology and research required to turn something as simple as a rice husk into something as strong and durable as a Huskup has been developed over many years. 'We're now in a position to take this to the next level', Richard tells us, 'with more collaborations, new designs and new product launches – we've got plenty up our sleeve!' ■



CLOCKWISE
Huskup has teamed up with independent artists for its first 12 designs; Richard Milton, founder of Huskup; the rice husk coffee cups can withstand temperatures of -30°C to 120°C

FIND OUT MORE

- View all the Huskup designs and order online at huskup.com/shop
- More about the benefits of rice husks is at huskup.com
- Find out why Huskup is a MyGreenPod.com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes



Turn to page 7 to find out why Huskup is one of our top 15 Summer Switches



Julie Chen and Chris Forbes, co-founders of The Cheeky Panda, are tackling deforestation one wipe at a time

Before the first two-ply toilet paper rolled out of the mill in 1942, Brits were content with using leaves, wool, linen and, after the birth of the printing press, pages of disused books and pamphlets. Today it's hard to imagine a world (or even a bathroom) without paper toilet roll, but there's a wiser way to wipe.

The Cheeky Panda turns bamboo that would otherwise go to waste into luxury tissues. Compared with trees, bamboo grows 20 to 30 times faster, produces 35% more oxygen and absorbs 30% more carbon. It's also 100% biodegradable, meaning it breaks down easily in sewers and macerators.

While recycled loo rolls require de-inking agents or harsh chemicals in the manufacturing process, bamboo has many skin-friendly qualities: it's antibacterial, antifungal, odour resistant and naturally soft and durable. In fact The Cheeky Panda classic range is three-ply, which makes it slightly stronger than the two-ply loo roll in most mainstream classic paper toilet paper ranges.

Soft, strong and effective – plus these tissue products have no carbon footprint. It's not surprising that The Cheeky Panda is one of the UK's fastest-growing start-ups, and has been endorsed by a growing fan club that includes Joanna Lumley and Dame Judi Dench.

'THAT SOUNDS INTERESTING...'

The co-founders, Chris Forbes and Julie Chen, are a husband and wife team. 'We were both already business people', Chris tells us. 'Julie said, 'Do you know that you can turn bamboo into tissue paper?' and I was like, 'That sounds interesting'. She said 'I've got an idea for it, it's called The Cheeky Panda'. But I needed eyes on it, to see for myself whether the bamboo was ethically sourced and whether the business could scale.'

The quality of the tissue was another thing Chris wanted to investigate; a sustainable product launched with the best intentions won't take off if it doesn't work. Chris and Julie discovered that because bamboo fibres are rounder and smoother, the tissue has a silky, soft feel and doesn't create that horrible dusty lint.

'When we found out we could make a sustainable tissue that was also the same quality or better than leading-brand toilet paper, we thought why aren't we using this? This is bonkers, right?', Chris says. Lots of UK consumers seem to agree; after

GETTING *cheeky*



Soft, strong, sustainable and skin friendly – The Cheeky Panda bamboo loo roll has it all

launching in 2016, The Cheeky Panda is now turning over £2m, which works out to about 20,000 active monthly buyers. While this is only a fraction of the £2bn turned over in the UK tissue market – and the £20bn and £10bn turned over annually by the companies behind the biggest toilet paper brands – Chris and Julie have surprised the experts with their fast growth and success.

'Most people still haven't heard of us or tried the products yet', Chris tells us. 'At the moment we're still building relationships with suppliers and educating the market about why bamboo is a more sustainable and healthier alternative. When you have a new product you have to spend a lot of time on education, and that's the hard part.'

DISRUPTING A SECTOR

The most obvious question is about the carbon footprint of shipping all that bamboo over from China. 'It's the same issue for all tissue', Chris explains. 'The pulp we use for paper toilet roll comes from Canada, Scandinavia and South America. Bamboo also produces 35% more oxygen and absorbs 30% more carbon in the growth phases, so compared with regular tissue our cradle to grave carbon is 65% less.'

The remaining carbon is offset through investment in a carbon balancing programme in a Vietnam rainforest. This means every time someone buys The Cheeky Panda tissue, some money goes towards the protection of the rainforest.

Chris admits that, as newcomers to the industry, he and Julie have had 'a steep learning curve'. At the same time, having fresh eyes has huge benefits for anyone looking to disrupt an entire sector.

The Cheeky Panda is already looking ahead, with plans to introduce a plastic-free 'subscribe and save' range and natural bamboo wipes. 'It's not easy', Chris says, 'but keep watching this space as we pioneer green innovations – and hopefully inspire others along the way.'

The first paper toilet rolls were manufactured to stop people being exposed to the toxic inks on printed sheets of paper. Today's mainstream paper toilet roll can contain all sorts of chemicals – ranging from synthetic fragrances to lotions and dyes. Loo roll as we know it was invented as a way to protect health; it's time for another new solution – and The Cheeky Panda might just be it. ■

FIND OUT MORE

- For The Cheeky Panda stockists, visit thecheekypanda.co.uk/where-to-buy
- More about the benefits of bamboo is at thecheekypanda.co.uk
- Find out why The Cheeky Panda is a MyGreen Pod.com Hero at mygreenpod.com/heroes



Turn to page 7 to find out why The Cheeky Panda is one of our Top 5 Summer Switches



JARVIS GOES *hybrid*

If hybrids are here to stay, make sure they're a step on your journey to an EV

Last year ministers pledged to ban new cars powered by fossil fuels by 2040, but in July 2018 transport secretary Chris Grayling confirmed hybrid cars – powered by electricity and diesel or petrol – would be exempt from the ban. This is good news if you want to get into a 'hot hybrid', but not great for air quality or our future generations.

It's further evidence that change won't come from the top down – from big corporations or government. The government believes there's a process for shifting lifestyle habits like buying

cars, but a lifestyle habit is something we are in control of. My advice, as always: spend your hard-earned cash in places that change the status quo. But if you want to try a more eco mode of transport before you get an EV, have a go in a hybrid. The Outlander and XC90 offer a fully electric driving option, so you can get used to how it feels before you make the full switch. ■

FIND OUT MORE

■ The latest news on green transport is at mygreenpod.com/transport



TOYOTA C-HR

Stated fuel economy: CO2 emissions of 86g/km, fuel efficiency 74.3MPG
Price: From £24,500
Jarvis says: 'A lot of fun. The looks and drive match up, making this hybrid great value for money.'



TOYOTA RAV4

Stated fuel economy: CO2 emissions of 118g/km, official combined figure for fuel efficiency 55.4MPG
Price: From £29,010
Jarvis says: 'A pleasant experience. Nothing too thrilling, but it felt safe and trustworthy.'



LEXUS RC 300H

Stated fuel economy: CO2 emissions of 116g/km, fuel efficiency 57.6MPG
Price: From £37,145
Jarvis says: 'Low to the ground for a much sportier drive. If that's what you're into then the RC 300h won't disappoint.'



MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER PHEV

Stated fuel economy: CO2 emissions of 42g/km, fuel efficiency 156MPG
Price: From £32,505
Jarvis says: 'Slightly underwhelmed, but a lot of car for the price. Electric-only range is 32.5 miles at cruising speed – so lots of short journeys.'



VOLVO XC90 T8

Stated fuel economy: CO2 emissions of 49g/km, official weighted combined figure for fuel efficiency is 134.5MPG (highly unlikely, but 75MPG has been reported)
Price: From £65,800
Jarvis says: 'Really clever and fun – but it should be at this price! My clear favourite.'



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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 ethical shoes, accessories and fitness wear to an environmental consultancy package for your SME – to help you keep your cool in the heat.

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
ACCESSORIES FROM WILBY!
One lucky winner will bag a vegan Vrocskin clutch, made from cork, and two pairs of earrings – in chain and bolt designs – from Wilby, the accessories brand where ethics meet fashion.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
THE CHEEKY PANDA HAMPER!
Celebrate your switch to bamboo tissue products! The winner will receive a bottle of Jacquart champagne, a stainless steel reusable water bottle, bamboo facial and pocket tissues, luxury bamboo towels, a super-soft panda toy and a filled picnic hamper for four.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
£500 OF ETHICAL SHOES FROM PO-ZU!
You could kit your whole family out with this fantastic prize from ethical footwear brand Po-Zu. One lucky winner will get to choose £500 of shoes from Po-Zu's mainline collection or its Star Wars™ range of shoes and boots, under license with Lucasfilm/Disney. May the Force be with you!

Deadline for entries: 31.09.18



WIN
A HUSKUP REUSABLE COFFEE CUP!
We've got our hands on 24 gorgeous Huskups – plastic-free reusable coffee cups made from the humble rice husk! They're biodegradable but also durable, and able to withstand temperatures from -30°C to 120°C. Safe for the microwave and the dishwasher. Designs will vary.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
A BEARD BALM DUO!
10 winners will receive an Original and a Pepperwood natural beard balm from Original Beard Company. Free from beeswax and vegan friendly, these balms can tackle itching and dry skin, and the essential oil blends smell incredible. Your beard will look (and smell) its best.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
A GREEN ELEMENT SME PACKAGE!
Green Element, the B Corp certified environmental management consultancy, has put together a Small Business Package aimed specifically at SMEs looking to reduce their carbon footprint. When your company 'becomes' more eco, productivity increases!

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
£200 RUBYMOON GYM TO SWIM FITNESS WEAR!
One winner will get to spend £200 on RubyMoon's mix and match collection of Gym to Swim fitness wear. It's a unique, sustainable and beautiful collection of premium sports separates, from crop tops and sports bras to leggings, rash guards and swimsuits.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



WIN
WELEDA VERY VANILLA KIDS' SHAMPOO & BODYWASH!
150 readers will receive one of these gorgeous Weleda products – they're designed for kids, but you might want to share! NATRUE-certified natural, cruelty-free and vegan, it's kind to skin and eyes, and also fun to use thanks to a special design for smaller hands.

Deadline for entries: 07.10.18



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