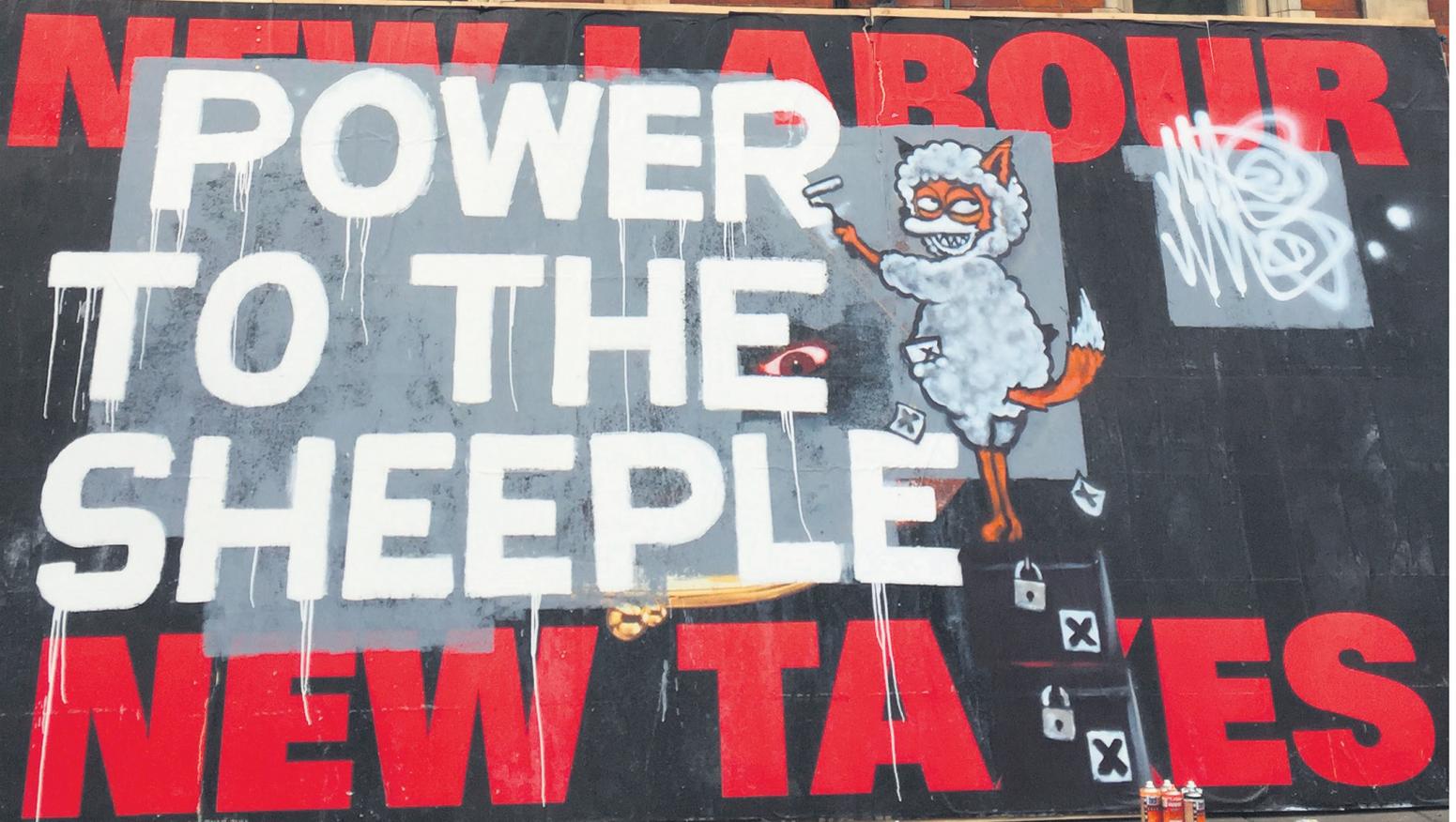


SUMMER '15



THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION ISSUE



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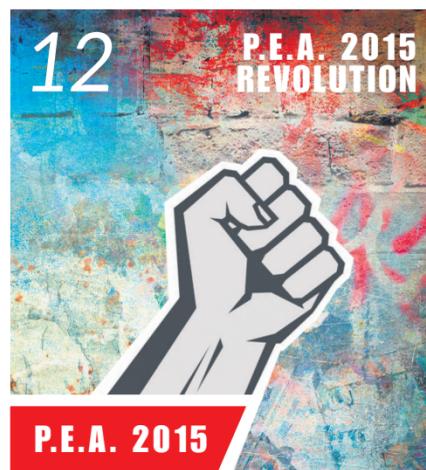
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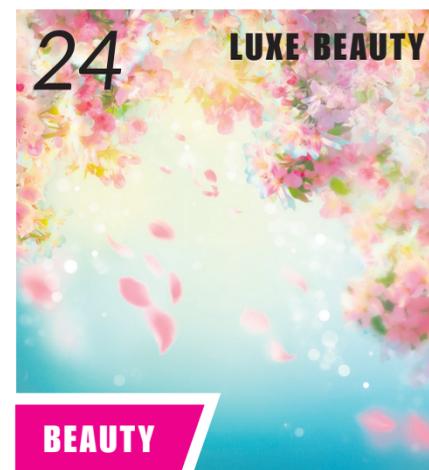
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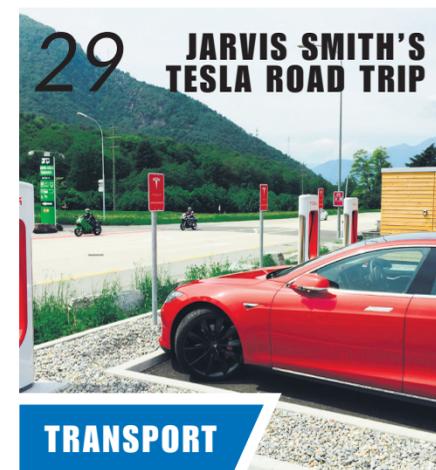
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POWER TO THE PEOPLE



IS THIS THE END FOR COMMUNITY ENERGY – OR THE BEGINNING OF A TRANSFORMED INDUSTRY?

Collectively, communities up and down the country have been taking on the Big Six and an energy market that lacks transparency and doesn't seem fit for purpose.

There are now over 400 UK community energy groups, meaning there's significant momentum to drive change in the sector and map out a new way to generate, receive and pay for energy.

But just as the idea of renewable community energy was starting to gain serious traction, DECC announced a series of proposals that could put the kibosh on new projects that haven't yet received funding or approval.

Uncertain territory

Projects that were pre-accredited before the end of June 2015 benefit from a 6.16p/kWh Feed-in-Tariff (FiT), but proposed changes to the rules governing FiTs threaten future projects by putting a question mark over the price that will be paid for renewable energy.

'The level of FiT obviously directly impacts on the project economics, but removal of pre-accreditation for FiTs is possibly a bigger issue, as you don't know what level of income you can expect – not only during the development phase of the project, but also during the fundraising', said Jan-Willem Bode, managing director of Mongoose Energy. 'That's difficult to sell to

community investors. Certainty is possibly more important than the level of income.'

But FiTs aren't the only thing causing uncertainty: the Renewables Obligation (RO) subsidy for wind power has already been scrapped (with a grace period) and support for new small-scale (sub-5MW) solar farms will also be axed if DECC's plans are approved.

Together, these proposals could seriously affect the growth of future community energy projects; DECC admitted as much when it acknowledged some of the changes 'will have a particular impact upon the community sector.'

'The removal of Climate Change Levy and Levy Exemption Certificates (LECs) at a time of low wholesale electricity prices for Feed-in-Tariff projects leads to a decrease in income of approximately 4.5%', Jan-Willem told *PQ*. 'This is big – and for many of our projects it effectively means halving the size of the community fund.'

The rise of community energy

Small-scale renewable energy projects weren't viable until the Feed-in-Tariff was introduced in 2010. The scheme provided a market driver for smaller scale community-owned projects and a number of community energy organisations were set up as a result. The main goal was to raise enough money to install solar panels on the roofs of schools and other community buildings.

From a couple of roofs to a dozen roofs – and from small-scale wind farms to larger solar farms – community energy has grown massively over the last couple of years; in order to avoid the risk of fizzling out, it's now more important than ever that the sector continues to grow.

That's where Mongoose Energy comes in. 'We realised that a lot of these community groups are very enthusiastic and doing exciting things', Jan-Willem told *PQ*, 'but when you really want to scale up the risks increase, the budgets involved in the development of the project go up and the knowledge and skills required for financial structuring become more complex, too.'

Community projects were initially financed in a pretty straightforward way – by money raised through community share offers. Now they can contain all sorts of different financial instruments, along with all the jargon that comes with them: senior debt, junior debt, mezzanine, under writing and bridge finance are just a few of the terms that have joined the humble (and straightforward) community share offer.

Scaling up

Mongoose Energy was set up as a spin-off of Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE), an award-winning community benefit society that was one of the first community energy organisations to scale up from small rooftop projects to larger renewable energy installations.

'Towards the end of 2014 we realised that, in order to scale up community energy, there was a need for an organisation that could take on some of the risks associated with larger scale project development and project acquisition, and that could also really focus on working with a larger number of community groups across the UK', Jan-Willem explains.

The overarching goal for Mongoose is to allow customers to buy energy directly from a local renewable energy source. To make this happen, the company needs to develop and acquire renewable energy projects, get them into community ownership and sell the energy directly to customers.

'Mongoose effectively provides community energy in a box', Jan-Willem explains. 'If you are a community group and you need help finding, structuring or financing your project, we can help. If you need help managing the fundraising process, we can help. If you want to be able to sell electricity to your community, we will be able to help.'

The case for decentralised energy

The UK grid is designed to transport lots of electricity right across the country – from large coal-fired power plants in the north and nuclear plants in the south. It's not geared up for decentralised generation; we've already seen regions where there's simply no capacity to connect more wind or solar as, without a major investment in infrastructure, the grid just can't cope with it.

The advantage of decentralised generation is that, in general, it can be generated much closer to where it's used. That's fundamentally a better proposition than generating electricity at a substantial distance from where it's needed: losses are reduced and – if structured well – the local economy benefits as a result.

Take, for example, a solar roof. The building owner benefits from having an additional income stream from renting out the roof, the tenants (and others) benefit from having lower electricity costs, the investors benefit from having a healthy return and the community benefits as surplus profits are being paid into

a fund that's available for grants. Economic development and the sustainable generation of energy contribute to a more resilient local society.

'I see the future as a combination of community and commercial projects, with a retail company linking it all', Jan-Willem told *PQ*. 'If a solar panel on a house produces electricity that the home doesn't need, it could be used by another household in the same area. In that way, different renewable energy projects, together with smart meters and storage, could really become a virtual power plant, delivering all kinds of benefits at a local level.'

The future for renewables

'I don't think the government is specifically turning its back on community energy', Jan-Willem told us, 'rather more on renewable energy as a whole. As a concept, I don't think community energy will necessarily be impacted much by DECC's recent announcements. The key question is whether scale can still be achieved despite the announcements.'

Resources vary across different parts of the country, but in principle – and assuming the regulatory framework, financials and grid are in place to make a project work – there's no reason why all communities across the country shouldn't be able to generate their own energy.

'I think DECC is very aware of the interest in – and the possibilities for – community energy', Jan-Willem told *PQ*. 'There genuinely is enough resource to provide renewable energy to every household in the UK. Technical solutions definitely exist to be able to do that by 2050.'

But politicians and government need to do more for the community energy sector; from a technical point of view, grid upgrades to connect decentralised energy are crucial – and certainty regarding support mechanisms would help. But, as Jan-Willem points out, 'every company or organisation that has been active in this field is used to riding the waves of regulatory change.'

Mongoose live in solid communities and symbolise what communities can achieve when they work together. 'I would love to see a situation where masses of people buy their electricity through a community-owned energy supply business from community-owned renewable energy projects', Jan-Willem told us. 'With Mongoose Energy I'll work hard to get to a point where everyone runs their home through a community renewable energy project.' ❏



Huw Davies, head of personal banking, Triodos Bank

HOW BANKING CAN BENEFIT PEOPLE AND PLANET

FINANCING CHANGE

Healthy profit can be used to support positive change – but short-term profit that's achieved by unsustainable borrowing can be plain damaging.

And that doesn't just apply to banking; 'The same damage can be seen in unsustainable intensive agriculture, or energy production that doesn't account for the future costs of climate change', explains Huw Davies, head of personal banking at Triodos Bank.

Using money consciously

Triodos Bank was set up in the Netherlands in 1980, when its four founders identified solutions to the problems plaguing the mainstream banking sector. They realised that money could be used much more consciously and decided to set up a different kind of bank: instead of pursuing profit for profit's sake, Triodos Bank would use money to make a positive difference and support sustainable development.

'Of course we started small, but over time we've grown – at a sustainable pace – to become one of the world's leading sustainable banks', Huw told *PQ*. 'We have a voice beyond our size and aim to stimulate debate on the banking sector and the use of money.'

The new approach is proving attractive to consumers: Triodos Bank now has over half a million customers in six countries. 'As we grow we're attracting a wider range of customers', Huw told us, 'but the common denominator is that they all place value on sustainability and aspire for a better, fairer way of banking that benefits people and planet.'

How it works

Triodos takes in savings deposits and lends them to organisations and businesses that are driving positive change. In the UK it lends to sectors including organic farming, fair trade, social housing, cultural projects and renewable energy.

Rather than being motivated by profit alone, Triodos Bank's main focus is positive change that benefits both society and the environment. All lending decisions are based on the intended

impact of a project as well as its financials.

It goes without saying that profitability is necessary in order for the bank to secure investment and grow as a business – but the point of growth at Triodos is to facilitate further positive impact and deeper change.

Transparent finance

All banks must have a credible product range and offer security and stability to their customers: what makes Triodos Bank different is its transparency.

Research has shown that many investors wouldn't want to invest their ISAs in polluting industries but many funds invest in oil or mining, and it can take a lot of time and effort for a customer to find out exactly what their money's supporting.

Huw would like to see more prominent notices on investments, and has suggested a traffic light system – similar to the one used in the food industry – to allow customers to make more informed decisions about where their money's invested.

To make it easier for customers to see where their money ends up, every loan made by Triodos Bank is shown on a map using an online tool called 'Know Where Your Money Goes'.

Changing the face of banking

'It wouldn't be possible for all banks to adopt our approach in full', Huw admits. 'But I hope we can provide an illustration of what's possible and inspire the public and other banks

to consider the role of financial services in creating our future. We have a choice in how things turn out, but action is needed.'

For Huw, the main barrier to creating genuine change in the banking system is one of culture and purpose. Practical steps have been made to create more stability in the system, but he feels there hasn't been enough discussion around the role of banks and how they can – and should – be a key factor in supporting a more sustainable future.

'We need visionary leaders in the sector who can set a more inspiring direction instead of offering more of the same', Huw told *PQ*. 'We need not just new banks but new bankers – senior leaders who are motivated by more than share prices and their salaries, and who recognise the potential power of banking for good.'

But bank-initiated change must come hand-in-hand with public demand for change and regulatory pressure to change. Shareholders and stakeholders must be convinced to focus on more than just short-term returns, and customers must vote with their feet if they're not satisfied with the status quo.

'Finance is a catalyst that makes things happen – it shouldn't be a business for its own sake', Huw told *PQ*. 'This means that banks need to remember why they exist and how they interconnect with society. When enough people become interested in the potential power of financial services for good, they'll start to demand more from banks. That's when we'll see real change.' ✕

For more information about Triodos Bank and the projects it supports, visit triodos.co.uk



MAKE MONEY DO GOOD

DIVESTING FROM 'BAD' INDUSTRIES IS GREAT – BUT COULD OUR CASH BE USED TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT INSTEAD?



Lisa Ashford, CEO of Ethex.

The divestment movement has taken the UK by storm, with universities, cities and even the Church of England pledging to put an end to their investments in the fossil fuel industry.

It's the fastest-growing divestment movement in history; around 200 institutions globally – with a combined asset size of over \$50 billion – have now pledged to move their money.

Campaigners are celebrating a victory that's helping to cut the supply cord to some of the world's dirtiest polluters. But is there a way to make all this money do some real good, rather than diverting it from industries that are 'bad'? 'At Ethex we talk about positive investments', explains Lisa Ashford, CEO of Ethex. 'What does that mean? It means investing money for good. You can invest your money and receive a fair financial, social and environmental return. That's a win-win-win situation!'

'Bad' investments

Ethical investing has traditionally been about banishing 'bad' investments such as tobacco, arms and pornography, but the positive investment movement is about going beyond that: instead, money is invested with a clear intention to make a positive impact.

'That's making money do good!', Lisa told *PQ*. 'Whether it's investing in community energy, social housing or fair trade, there is something for everyone to get involved. There is a misconception that positive investments don't have a financial return. That is not the case. They are a viable alternative to traditional finance products, with an additional feel-good factor!'

The divestment campaign has inspired many of

us to move our own money, but it's not always easy to untangle the web and see where money tied up in pensions, banks, insurance and investments actually is.

Where's your money?

'The first step is knowing where your money is and finding out how much control you have over it', Lisa told us. 'It's an interesting exercise and, surprisingly, many people aren't totally on top of where their money is and what it's doing.'

If you only have a current account or an ISA then divestment could be very straightforward, but a retired professional won't have the same financial profile as a student or a young family, and may need a longer plan to divest slowly and move gradually towards more positive investments. 'Ethex is currently helping a core group of people to do just this', Lisa told us, 'so contact us if you want to help test drive our Money Action Plan.'

If you want to be proactive you can ask your bank or pension fund where your money goes; you can also use resources like Move Your Money and Ethical Consumer to get a clearer idea of the market. Armed with this information, you can start to make more positive choices.

'There are some inspiring positive investments out there on the market', Lisa told us, 'so once you feel empowered and informed to make some positive investment decisions, start comparing different products, such as those listed on ethex.org.uk.'

Democratic finance

Financial returns vary but can be up to 6% with tax relief on top. Ethex offers a range of

projects, such as community energy, that create local community benefits as well as funding renewable energy projects. 'You can invest in the community energy scheme and have a say in how the organisation is run – democratic finance in action!', Lisa explains. 'We try and make positive investing easy for people to understand and do – but if in doubt, ask for help! We can help to put you in touch with an ethical financial advisor if you need some advice.'

Divest, reinvest

For Lisa, the very act of divestment naturally leads to the question of reinvestment – but many of us would still struggle to trust banks to invest our cash wisely and ethically. 'A series of scandals and mismanagement – added to a traditional finance sector designed to be impenetrable to the layman – has left many disappointed with the world of finance', Lisa explains.

Crowdfunding platforms offer an alternative by allowing people to put money into businesses they believe in. 'This disruptive finance model is a gamechanger that's also very accessible', Lisa told us. 'In Ethex's case, it allows people to have a direct connection with their money and the organisations they invest in.'

People who are engaged with the divestment issue are generally also passionate about helping to minimise climate change. For Lisa, this presents a huge opportunity for people to come together and make money do good. 'The divestment movement could in fact mobilise billions of pounds into renewable energy and other positive investments with a social and environmental impact.', Lisa told us. 'That's a real people revolution!' ✕

COMMUNITY ENERGY

WILL DIVESTMENT FROM OIL LEAD TO INVESTMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS?

A rooftop installation for Bath and West Community Energy



Jan-Willem Bode, managing director of Mongoose Energy

It sounds like a no-brainer: generate electricity where it's needed and stimulate the local economy at the same time.

'The simplicity of the proposition attracted me to the community energy sector', explains Jan-Willem Bode, managing director of Mongoose Energy. 'Generate renewable energy in the community and finance from the community – and deliver clean, cheaper electricity to the community, with additional profits going back into the community.'

On top of that, shares in community energy projects can offer a solid investment opportunity: you can expect a reasonable rate of return while directly supporting the decarbonisation of the energy supply. Did I mention that it sounds like a no-brainer?

Change afoot for renewables

Recently proposed changes to the support of renewable energy projects (see pp2-3) have created a degree of uncertainty regarding how new community energy projects will move forward – but this doesn't apply to existing projects or those pre-accredited before 30 June 2015.

'While this uncertainty doesn't help, the majority of our investors are looking for a long-term investment', Jan-Willem told us. 'They see the returns – both environmental and financial – that we will generate, and realise the impact that our industry will have over time.'

Working with, and on behalf of, communities across the UK, Mongoose Energy acquires and develops renewable energy projects, moving them into community ownership with the intention of selling the energy generated directly to customers who live nearby.

The company acquires solar, wind, hydro and anaerobic digestion projects ranging from rooftops that generate tens of kilowatts to 5MW solar arrays. Jan-Willem would even 'love to get involved in getting offshore wind farms into community ownership!'. If DECC's proposals are creating any nervousness in the

community energy market, Jan-Willem's not feeling it.

New opportunities

Mongoose Energy only properly launched in April 2015, but it already has close to 100MW of renewable energy projects in the pipeline – each of which will provide a new investment opportunity for the public. The intention is for all projects to be financed and built before the end of the financial year. The company is looking to fund another 10-15 community solar projects over the next nine months.

For Mongoose the uncertainty in the market may very well lead to more opportunities. 'We will have more possibilities to acquire existing sites – uncertainty in a market always leads to consolidation – and take them into community ownership', Jan-Willem explains. 'It also means there will be a willing market for our energy supply offering.'

How it works

In a typical example of how community energy projects get started, Mongoose Energy would be approached by an organisation (either community or commercial) that has already 'developed' a project – meaning that it has planning permission, an accepted grid offer and, in the case of a ground-mounted solar farm, the rights to use the land.

'We then purchase the rights to the project and register it with Ofgem as a community project', Jan-Willem explains. The project must then be built and connected to the grid within the next 12 months. Community projects tend to take longer than commercial projects as a community fund raise must be organised – typically through a community share offer.

Mongoose Energy then works with the community around the project – or the group that suggested it – to get everything in place for the build to begin. It will simultaneously work with the various contractors who will build the project and liaise with the grid operator to ensure the connection and installation are completed on time. Legal arrangements are then finalised – such as the lease of the land – and Mongoose Energy ensures all contracts are in place so that the money can be released and the building can start. From this point, the main task is to oversee the project build on behalf of the community and ensure that the project gets finalised and handed over when it's all working properly.

'We effectively support community groups with getting projects into community ownership', Jan-Willem told us. 'This means we're not looking to own any projects ourselves. Instead,

we're dedicated to getting these projects into community ownership by working with the community benefit societies – who, because of our cooperative structure, will also be members of Mongoose Energy.'

Funding and support

Smaller community energy projects are typically 100% funded by members of the community groups, while larger projects tend to be financed through a combination of equity and debt. The debt comes from banks – the 5MW community-owned Braydon Manor project got approximately 50% of its finance from Triodos Bank – while the equity is raised through crowdfunding. 'Typically, over 70% of the equity raised comes from investors within the community that has been targeted', Jan-Willem explains.

If Mongoose Energy's offered the opportunity to acquire a project and bring it into community ownership, it's part of the company's initial due diligence process to see whether there's sufficient community support and whether enough people are interested in becoming involved in the project. 'Community-led projects are inherently better', Jan-Willem told PQ. 'But obviously, projects need to be viable as well: if it's a wind project, it needs to be windy. So it's a combination of everything – community support and interest, technology and finance.'

Of course, opposition does exist – with one of the main arguments against a community energy project being that the technology required could be considered a 'visual intrusion' on the landscape. Still, opposition generally comes from a small minority – especially when people realise the business model and associated benefits for the community.

Going local

Any community can set up its own renewable energy project: it just needs a group of people who are enthusiastic about getting the project off the ground. The group – initially probably made up of volunteers – will be organised through either a

community interest company or a community benefit society. Known as 'Bencoms', these cooperatives trade for the benefit of the community rather than the shareholders.

The first obvious benefit to communities is that individuals can invest in – and personally benefit from – the building of an energy installation in their neighbourhood.

Communities will also benefit from access to money in a community fund. 'Because of the nature of the financial model, the community fund tends to grow over the 20-year period of the lifetime of the project', Jan-Willem explains. Last year, Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) donated £20K to the charity that runs its fund. This year it will allocate £50K.

These significant funds are spent locally on fuel poverty and carbon reduction measures – 'unsexy' areas that have traditionally been ignored by mainstream funders.

There are always opportunities for local people to be employed on projects, too – from local graphic designers to the person employed to mow the grass around the solar panels. 'Local halls are hired and local caterers are used for events', Jan-Willem told us. 'Most community energy companies will have a policy of employing locally wherever possible.'

Investment and returns

Equity for community energy projects is typically raised through a local share offer and administered through a crowdfunding platform, such as Ethex, that allows people to invest directly. 'We also organise a lot of local events where people can hear a presentation about the project, ask questions of the directors and obtain a copy of the Share Offer Document', Jan-Willem told PQ. 'This provides all the details they need on how to invest.'

The return on investment in a Bencom always has to be reasonable bearing in mind the risk involved and the rate needed to attract and keep capital. A typical investment in a Bencom such as BWCE has seen a 7%

gross return per annum for the last four years.

Most projects are also eligible for EIS, which gives taxpayers a further immediate uplift of 30% to their overall return. Whether these levels of return can be maintained for new projects remains to be seen. An alternative approach is the one used for the Chelwood solar scheme (see pp8-9); it offers a slightly lower rate of interest that's linked to RPI, ensuring that investors are always getting a real rate of return that's relative to inflation.

Once the projects are built the financial risk is very low: the tariffs are locked in and, while energy prices are quite low now, they will increase significantly over time. The guaranteed export tariff in addition to the Feed-in-Tariff for projects registered before 30 June also guarantees returns.

However, the uncertainty caused by the announcement around the FiT review, especially around pre-accreditation, does significantly increase risk on the development and financing of these projects.

What to look out for

'If you're looking for a good community energy investment opportunity, make sure that the project characteristics are solid', Jan-Willem advises. 'Look for detailed, transparent financial figures, the involvement of quality parties and an experienced contractor. Secondly, a good community energy investment opportunity should provide a significant contribution to the local community.'

There are always lots of different reasons for making an investment, but Mongoose Energy's research shows that investors are mainly looking for an investment that provides a realistic rate of return and has a strong ethical and community element.

'As yet we can't identify a specific increase that we can put down to the divestment movement', Jan-Willem told PQ, 'but we have certainly seen a large increase in interest in community-owned clean energy as the reality of peak oil and climate change gains more traction.'

A number of councils have invested in community energy projects and, once the sector gets larger and more mature, Jan-Willem expects that pension funds will be solid investors as they look to divest from the carbon-heavy industries and move into clean energy. ☒

To find out more about Mongoose Energy and the projects it's developing, visit mongooseenergy.coop.

CHELWOOD SOLAR SCHEME

**THE COMMUNITY ENERGY PROJECT THAT WILL
TRANSFORM LAND AND LIVES**

The Chelwood solar scheme is a community solar energy project in Chelwood, near Bath, that will see a 5MW ground-mounted PV panel installation constructed across 22 acres of low-grade farmland near the village of Chelwood in the Chew Valley, south of Bristol.

The scheme has been registered with Ofgem, meaning the Feed-in-Tariff (FiT) is set at the 30 June 2015 level and won't be affected by the government's proposed changes to renewable energy support.

Improving the land

Chelwood Community Energy was set up to reduce the impact of climate change and increase energy security, generate significant community benefit, support the local economy and protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity.

The proposed site is considered to be of low ecological value, so its development and management would help to improve local biodiversity. A biodiversity management plan has been created to protect and enhance animal habitats on and next to the site. In time, it's hoped that protected species, such as bats and great crested newts, will be attracted to the area.

The site's entire operational area is currently used as pasture; this will be maintained to provide a habitat for invertebrates, mammals and ground-nesting birds such as the skylark.

The grassland will be grazed during autumn and early spring to minimise disturbance to reptiles and amphibians.

A 'reversible' development

This development is 'reversible', meaning it will be dismantled and taken away at the end of its life. The planning permission granted to the development is temporary, and the conditions state that all equipment must be taken away after 25 years. The cost will be covered by a decommissioning fund taken from the scheme's revenue.

The shallow steel screw pile foundations minimise ground impact and can easily be taken up when the solar scheme is decommissioned, allowing the field to return to its former state. The farmland's use as a solar farm won't affect its agricultural value, but its biodiversity and habitat richness will be enhanced.

Powering 1,160 homes

Once operational – by the end of the year, if all goes to plan – the FCA-regulated Chelwood solar scheme will produce 4,844MWh of electricity per year, which is enough to meet the annual electricity consumption of 1,160 typical homes.

Payments to the independent Chelwood Community Benefit Fund are an important part of this project: projections indicate that up to £1.2 million will be made available over the project's 25-year lifetime. The expected return

for investors is an RPI linked 5.5%, which means returns should start at 5.5% in year one and then increase with RPI. The project has also been given Advance Assurance from HMRC for EIS tax relief, meaning the total expected return is estimated at 9.2% gross per year.

Any profits left after members have been paid will be contributed to the Chelwood Community Benefit Fund, which will help finance local infrastructure projects, wildlife conservation measures and schemes that address energy efficiency and local fuel poverty. The base case financial projections indicate that, over 25 years, up to £1.2 million will be available for distribution to local communities through this fund.

Shares and membership

Anyone over the age of 18 can buy shares in the Chelwood solar scheme before the share offer closes on 24 August 2015. Shares are £1 each, with a minimum investment of £500 and a maximum investment of £100,000. People living within five miles of Chelwood village can invest as little as £200.

As a member you will be able to vote at the AGM, elect directors, have a say in how the Chelwood Community Fund is run and receive interest on your shares. ✕

All investments carry risks; make sure you read the Share Offer Document at chelwood.org before you make any decisions. More information can also be found at ethex.org.uk.



Chelwood solar scheme board



Village hall, Chelwood

SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND INCREASING ENERGY SECURITY

WILMINGTON FARM SOLAR ARRAY



Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE)'s 2.34MW Wilmington Farm Solar Array is already up and running; it went live in March and, at the time, was Bath and North East Somerset's biggest community-owned solar array. Investment from local community members and beyond totalled £2.1 million.

The 12-acre project generates clean electricity and helps reduce our dependence on carbon-intensive fossil fuels; Wilmington Farm Solar Array is expected to save 1,100 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum.

In its first year, the Wilmington Farm array's projected annual output is 2,223MWh – enough to meet annual electricity demand for over 650 homes.

Conservation

The site is managed for conservation purposes; according to the Wildlife Enhancement & Management Plan that was accepted as a planning condition for the project, the land beneath the panels will eventually turn into a wildflower meadow that's grazed by sheep.

Due to the relative lack of human activity on the site, the wildlife and wildflower populations are expected to thrive, enhancing the site's biodiversity.

Community energy in Bath

BWCE was established as a community benefit society in 2010 as a result of initiatives from local community groups Transition Bath and Transition Community Corsham.

Its purpose is to bring community ownership to energy projects in Bath and the surrounding area, concentrating on projects that will generate significant community benefit, support the local economy, reduce the impact of climate change and increase our energy security. The Wilmington Farm Solar Array is a significant step towards that goal.

The aim is to increase demand for local services and build a local sustainable energy infrastructure that will make local communities more resilient in the face of increasing energy costs and insecurity.

The story so far

To date BWCE has developed around 620kW of its own solar PV projects. These include a 250kW ground-mounted system at Hartham Business Park and a range of roof-mounted schemes on schools and community buildings.

BWCE has developed and commissioned a 1MW solar array in partnership with Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy at Chelworth in Wiltshire, and has successfully raised £2.2 million in partnership with Low Carbon Gordano to develop a 1.8MW solar array at Moorhouse Farm, near Avonmouth.

Community fund

BWCE's surplus profits are put back into local communities through the independent Bath & West Low Carbon Community Fund, which allocates money to projects proposed by groups and communities near BWCE projects. To be eligible for support, projects must meet criteria such as reducing fuel poverty and carbon

(through schemes addressing transport and waste, for example).

Over the last two years BWCE has paid nearly £25,000 to its Community Fund. This year it has allocated £50,000. Over the next 25 years Wilmington Farm Solar Array could generate over £700,000 for the fund, and over £1.7m could be generated from BWCE's full portfolio.

BWCE is currently developing solar PV, wind, biomass and hydro-electric projects with a combined capacity of over 15MW. The long-term goal is to develop as a community-owned Energy Supply Company (ESCo), supplying locally generated electricity to residents and the wider community.

Investing

Investors – from in and around Bath and further afield – become members of the community benefit society. Their investment will be used to fund clean energy projects in their locality.

In return, members receive an annual return, have a say in how the company is managed and help to decide how much money is contributed to the local community fund. Members can also stand for election as directors.

BWCE has been trading for three years, with 7% interest paid on members' investments year-on-year. BWCE's projects have on average performed between 5-10% above forecast. ☑

Find out more about BWCE's community energy projects at bwce.coop. More about the community fund can be found at bwce.coop/communityfund.





IF SO, COME AND HELP CELEBRATE THE P.E.A. AWARDS' 5TH BIRTHDAY!

Over the last five years, all sorts of people have been celebrated at the annual P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Award party – and they're all sustainability stars. This year, the judges want to hear about the unsung heroes on your own doorstep.

A brand new award category – supported by Yeo Valley, Britain's largest family-run organic brand – has been launched in search of Britain's Greenest Family. The judges are looking for families that have taken matters into their own hands in a bid to make Britain greener (and greater).

Got wild ideas?

'Whether you've installed some new tech that's raised your neighbours' eyebrows or have found a better recycling method than the one offered by your own council, we want to hear about the bonkers, beautiful things you're doing that could make you Britain's Greenest Family', said Jarvis Smith, P.E.A. Awards founder.

'We want to know what you're up to, why it works and how other people can help you scale your efforts up', Jarvis added. 'Inspire us with your stories and send us photos and videos so we can share them with the rest of the world. Nominate yourself, your wife, your children and neighbours – we want to hear about what you're doing to help change our future and make Britain greener.'

On the day...

A daytime event will mark the launch of the

brand new P.E.A. Nature Award, which honours the first anniversary of the designation of the UNESCO Lewes & Brighton Downs Biosphere Region.

Big Nature in the Biosphere will transform the foyer of the Brighton Centre into a celebration of local biodiversity ahead of the evening's celebrations.

Visitors of all ages will be invited to smell, touch, feel and enjoy the work of individuals and organisations striving to improve our relationship with the Biosphere's wildlife. A series of inspiring talks, workshops, trade stalls and hands-on demonstrations will introduce members of the public to the diversity of life in their local environment. The event will serve as a practical guide for creating new Nature habitats – whether you're retired or still at school.

The aim is to promote bio-empathy – an individual's emotional connection with the natural world – so that we may all learn the true value of our natural heritage.

Everything from green roofing to wildflowers and seed bombs will be available from the trade stalls, and a series of talks and practical demonstrations from green architects and representatives from various wildlife charities will help people of all ages to gain a better understanding of the world around them.

...And on the night

The awards ceremony will be held on the seafront in Brighton on 03 October 2015. Eco-buses will be provided for the journey from

ARE YOU



BRITAIN'S GREENEST FAMILY?

TO ENTER OR NOMINATE YOUR GREEN HERO, VISIT PEAWARDS.COM

London to Brighton.

The venue for this people-powered event, which has 'Revolution' as its theme, will be packed with street entertainers, musicians, artists and magicians.

A three-course sit-down vegetarian dinner will be provided by the venue's award-winning caterers, along with local wines and organic spirits. Evening entertainment will be provided by the Phoenix Rose, fronted by P.E.A. Awards founder Jarvis Smith, and an hour-long set by the Stereo MCs will help everyone celebrate the night's winners in style.

Visit Brighton tourist office will be offering discounts on hotels over the weekend, so you can stay for the night and enjoy Brighton's sites the following day (see p32 for some inspiration).

CATEGORIES AND JUDGES

Cat Fletcher, Brighton's very own resource goddess, will join David Viner (chair), Hugh Jones, Jarvis Smith, Jo Wood, Katie Hill, Martin Wright and Oliver Heath on 2015's panel of judges.

Awards will be presented in the following categories:

Britain's Greenest Family, Business, Energy, Shopping, Best Individual, Charity/NGO, Money, Town/City, Best Team, Community, Nature, Transport, Building, Education, Product, Travel/Tourism.

PEA AWARDS 2014



Last year's People. Environment. Achievement. (P.E.A.) Awards ceremony was a roaring success; the glamorous green carpet event honoured people who are walking the talk and championing successful approaches to sustainability in their respective fields – from technology and travel to community and campaign work.

Unlike other sustainability awards, the P.E.A.s celebrate individuals and teams rather than products and brands. They recognise the power of individuals when it comes to shifting paradigms, and send a clear message that positive change is in our own hands.

The theme for the awards ceremony was 'Unity', and the event demonstrated how big business and consumers can unite for positive change.

The winners are pioneering eco-warriors, heroes and champions who serve as living testament to the fact that individuals and groups can inspire real change where other leaders have failed.

Here are just some of the winners from the night and why they deserve to be recognised and celebrated. The other winners were covered in the spring issue of *PQ*, which can be found at mygreenpod.com/pq.



JAMIE HARTZELL
FOUNDER,
ETHEX

Ethex was set up to make positive investing easy to understand and easy to do. It helps individuals who are taking control of their finances and choosing to invest in businesses that address a social or environmental need as well as delivering a financial return (see p5).

Ethex brings all the positive investment opportunities available together on one website, so individuals can build a portfolio of investments – from community-owned renewable energy schemes and organic farms to charity bonds and the acquisition of pubs and shops for the local community. Ethex raised £6.8 million for more than 30 businesses before it celebrated its second birthday.

Ethex's view is that wider participation in financial markets is now unstoppable. The company produces an annual survey that tracks the growth of the positive investing marketplace, which now stands at £3.25 billion and includes 1.7 million people.

Positive investing is fast becoming a broad popular movement. The number of younger people investing is increasing, average investment amounts are rising and individual investors now tend to build a diversified portfolio of investments rather than just taking one single holding.

Jamie Hartzell's leadership of Ethex has gone beyond starting a business to starting a movement of self-directed positive investors who are more connected to their money, feel in control of it, want to know where it goes and recognise that they can make a positive social impact with it.

'Ethex needs to convince more people that they can take control of their own finances and actively invest in businesses they believe in', Jamie told *PQ*. 'Winning a P.E.A. Award has helped us to win public attention and has also boosted morale for the whole team.'

@ETHEKUK

ETHEX.ORG.UK

AWARD: NGO



BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION
TEAM AWARD

AWARD: TRANSPORT



DALE VINCE
FOUNDER,
ECOTRICITY

AWARD: TRAVEL & TOURISM



HOWARD CARTER
CEO AND
FOUNDER,
INCOGNITO

70% of the Earth's surface is water, yet 90% of our big fish are gone. 85% of world fish stocks are in crisis and marine degeneration is reaching a point of no return. If trends continue, there will be no more fish by 2048.

Yet the crisis is reversible if we create a worldwide network of Marine Protected Areas; the Blue Marine Foundation (BLUE)'s goal is to get 10% of the world's oceans under protection by 2020.

BLUE was set up in 2010 by the team behind the award-winning documentary *The End of the Line*. The UK-registered charity actively lobbies the government to protect the UK's overseas territories, which make up the world's fifth-largest marine zone. Protecting just three of these territories would protect 5% – as opposed to 3% – of our oceans.

In its first year, BLUE brokered a landmark deal between the UK government and the Bertarelli Foundation to create the largest fully protected marine reserve in the world. The Chagos Marine Reserve doubled the area of ocean under protection.

BLUE has also pioneered an award-winning project in Lyme Bay, Dorset, that brings together fishermen, conservationists and scientists to establish a model of sustainable fishing. Using the Lyme Bay model, BLUE is on track to establish a network of managed marine areas around the UK coastline.

'Winning the P.E.A. Award has made a huge difference to BLUE', said Clare Brook, CEO of the Blue Marine Foundation. 'As a small and young charity, being named NGO of the year by the P.E.A.s has given us a huge boost in terms of awareness and credibility. It has already helped us in our fundraising efforts, so we'll be able to work more effectively to place more of the ocean under protection.' ✕

@BLUEMARINEF
BLUEMARINEFOUNDATION.COM

Ecotricity installed the Electric Highway – a network of electric car charging stations on motorways and roads from Land's End to Perthshire – 'to kickstart Britain's electric car revolution'.

Britain's first and biggest national network of electricity pumps was designed to address two problems that were stalling the uptake of electric cars in the UK: the scarcity of charging stations and the 'range anxiety' that left drivers worried they'd be stranded without juice before they got close to the next charge point.

Ecotricity, with founder Dale Vince at the helm, started building the Electric Highway in July 2011. The network, which started with a single electric vehicle electricity pump at Welcome Break's South Mimms services, now covers almost all of Britain's motorways – and is now branching out onto smaller roads as well.

Electric cars are only a realistic option if the infrastructure's in place to support them. Charging points were previously concentrated in towns and city centres, making electric cars great city runarounds but impractical all-purpose vehicles. Now electric vehicle owners are able to make long journeys, meaning EVs are another step closer to becoming the most logical choice for all Britain's drivers.

The best part is that the Electric Highway is completely free to use; swipe the card you receive after signing up and you'll be able to plug in and charge up in the car parks of motorway service stations up and down the country.

Ecotricity focuses on installing fast chargers, or fast electricity pumps, on the Electric Highway. These units are designed to charge compatible electric vehicles from 0-80% in around 20-30 minutes. Just enough time for a coffee and a stretch of the legs before you're back on the road. Genius. ✕

@ECOTRICITY
ECOTRICITY.CO.UK

Incognito insect repellent is a market-leader in the environmentally friendly travel market. The 100% natural and biodegradable products help make personal travel more sustainably by providing a viable alternative to the widely used chemical DEET. Many travellers feel they have to use this pesticide – which pollutes bodies of water and has been found to be toxic to animals – because of the protection it provides against insect bites. However, incognito has been clinically proved to protect against malaria (as long as you sleep under a mosquito net) without covering your skin with chemicals.

Containing completely natural and organic ingredients, incognito doesn't pollute fragile ecosystems and is the only major insect repellent that has recycled plastic packaging. This saved over 1,000kg of plastic from landfill in 2012 and 2013. incognito is also a carbon-neutral company, and works with the Plant a Tree Today Foundation to cut carbon from its supply chain.

As a result of incognito sprays being sold in place of DEET, an estimated 5,500 litres of chemicals were diverted from waterways in 2013 alone. DEET is known to be toxic to several fish and plankton species – and the substance has been linked to fatal seizures, severe epidermal reactions, insomnia and impaired cognitive function in humans. In contrast, incognito insect repellent is safe to use on babies as young as four weeks old.

'The Award is a fantastic achievement as we continually seek to improve on our already impressive track record of environmental, ethical and social policies', said Howard Carter, CEO of incognito. 'Our targets for the future include reducing our carbon footprint by 12% by 2016, donating 750 mosquito nets to Africa by 2019 and continuing to donate 10% of our total profits annually to charities around the world.' ✕

@INCOGNITOUK
LESSMOSQUITO.COM



AWARD: BUSINESS



CHRISTINE HYNES
CEO, CLIMATE ENERGY HOMES

Christine Hynes was nominated for her pioneering construction company, Climate Energy Homes, which delivers affordable homes that meet the highest levels of energy efficiency.

Christine co-founded the company over 13 years ago and co-developed the innovative ecoTECH Fabric First and Passivhaus Build Systems that are at the core of Climate Energy Homes' revolutionary building approach.

The ecoTECH Build Systems can be tailored to achieve the highest levels of energy efficiency, meeting Code for Sustainable Homes 4, 5 and 6, Passivhaus and Zero Carbon standards. Low energy use means significantly reduced energy bills, taking vulnerable residents out of fuel poverty and ensuring that all residents can have a warmer, more comfortable home.

Christine's mission has been to prove that eco building can be just as cost-effective as a traditional build, if not more so. The recent housing scheme delivered in Rainham, London, is a great example of how Passivhaus techniques can be used to provide exceptionally high-performance homes for affordable rent. The 51 social housing homes have a higher specification than many far more expensive properties.

Thanks to Christine's vision and determination, Climate Energy Homes has been able to provide warmer, healthier homes with energy costs that are a fraction of those of average UK households.

'We hope that the P.E.A. Award will help to raise the profile of Climate Energy Homes within our sector', Christine told PQ, 'and put us in the spotlight as a pioneer of sustainable housing. It has been great to be rewarded and acknowledged as an inspiration within the market, and we will continue our commitment to the housing industry.' ✕

@CEN_ECOTECH
CLIMATEENERGYHOMES.COM

AWARD: CLEAN TECH



NICK WILLIAMS
INVENTOR,
iViTi

Nick Williams has come up with two pioneering inventions, which are now being developed and realised by iViTi Lighting. His first bright idea – and the one that caught the P.E.A. Award judges' attention – is the AdrON (Automatic Demand Response in Lighting) bulb: the greenest, least disruptive solution to grid balancing during peak demand times.

The AdrON is an LED lamp that has internal batteries and uses grid frequency monitoring technology to detect, in real time, when there is excessive pressure on the grid. It then automatically, immediately and undetectably starts to use its own internal batteries until the grid gets back to 'normal', at which point the lamp reverts back to mains power.

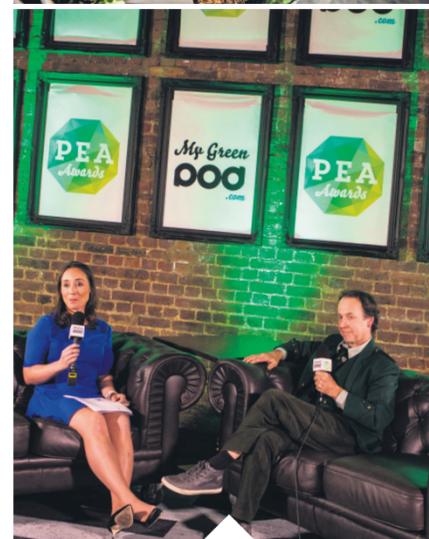
By taking pressure off the grid, the AdrON reduces our reliance on dirty old power stations when demand for energy is high. When the grid has surplus power, the battery uses the excess energy to recharge itself.

By switching to battery operation when demand is highest, the AdrON helps organisations to save money by avoiding peak energy rates. Selling pre-purchased excess energy provides an extra revenue stream and a great incentive for change, allowing companies to show their commitment to a purpose beyond profit.

The lights stay on for up to three hours if there's a power cut and come on automatically when an intruder or fire alarm sounds.

'We entered because we believed that the principles behind the P.E.A. Awards clearly represent the ideology of iViTi', said Trefor Jones, director of iViTi Lighting Limited. 'As a company, iViTi wants to respond to energy shortages and climate change by creating pioneering new products that directly address these issues. This P.E.A. Award will inspire us as we continue to evolve.' ✕

@iViTION
iViTION.CO.UK,
ADRON.CO.UK



AWARD: CAMPAIGNER (LOCAL)



CAT FLETCHER
RESOURCE GODDESS, FREEGLE UK DIRECTOR

Cat spends her waking hours interrupting the flow of usable goods to the waste stream, dreaming up creative reuse projects, participating in over 100 public 'waste' events each year, promoting the call to action to be less wasteful in every sphere and 'connecting unwanted stuff with every man and his dog'.

With her extraordinary team of volunteers, Cat works tirelessly to make reuse free and easy for UK citizens – always inspiring resourcefulness and waste awareness, reduction and solutions. She has also voluntarily run the Brighton Freegle group for eight years, and over 20,000 locals are inspired to reuse about 10 tonnes of stuff every month across the city as a result.

This significant waste prevention system, which is run entirely on goodwill and peer-to-peer participation, creates \$120,000 of economic value each year. As well as putting money back into the local community, the service provides creative and employment opportunities, builds community resilience and drives organisational and individual behaviour change.

Following a successful crowdfunding campaign, Cat has now also raised enough money (£11,333) to buy eight shipping containers. They'll be used to create a reuse depot in Brighton & Hove where anyone in the city will be able to drop off items they want to pass on for reuse or repair. A scrap and materials store will be available for artists, students, schools, festivals and other creative projects, and a 'library of things' will be full of tools, ladders and other useful bits and pieces that people will be able to borrow.

'There are so many amazing campaigners and innovators addressing the many and serious environmental and social issues we all face', Cat told PQ. 'Celebrating some of those achievements through the P.E.A. Awards really does help to cement hope and enable better collaboration – which in turn builds our collective impact and resilience.' ☒

@THISISFREEGLE,
 @WASTEHOUSE,
 @LOVECYCLE2015,
 @REUSEINTL,
 @CITYREUSEDEPOT
 REUSE.INTERNATIONAL,
 ILOVEFREEGLE.ORG

AWARD: PUBLIC SECTOR



MIKE DEEGAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CENTRAL MANCHESTER NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

Central Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (CMFT) has delivered a huge shift in environmental performance at a pace that's 'unheard of in the public sector', all against a backdrop of enormous budgetary pressure and wider organisational change.

In early 2013 the Trust didn't have a dedicated sustainability resource and was risking failure to meet even minimum statutory requirements.

In 2014, with the complete commitment and backing of the Trust's senior management, a multi-disciplinary sustainability team was created with the aim of bringing the Trust to the forefront of sustainability within the NHS. The Trust has achieved impressive results quickly by leading change from the top while at the same time encouraging grassroots participation.

Within 12 months the Trust managed more change than many organisations achieve in decades. Hundreds of projects have been delivered by staff at all levels within the organisation, with the end result being a genuine shift in the way the Trust does business.

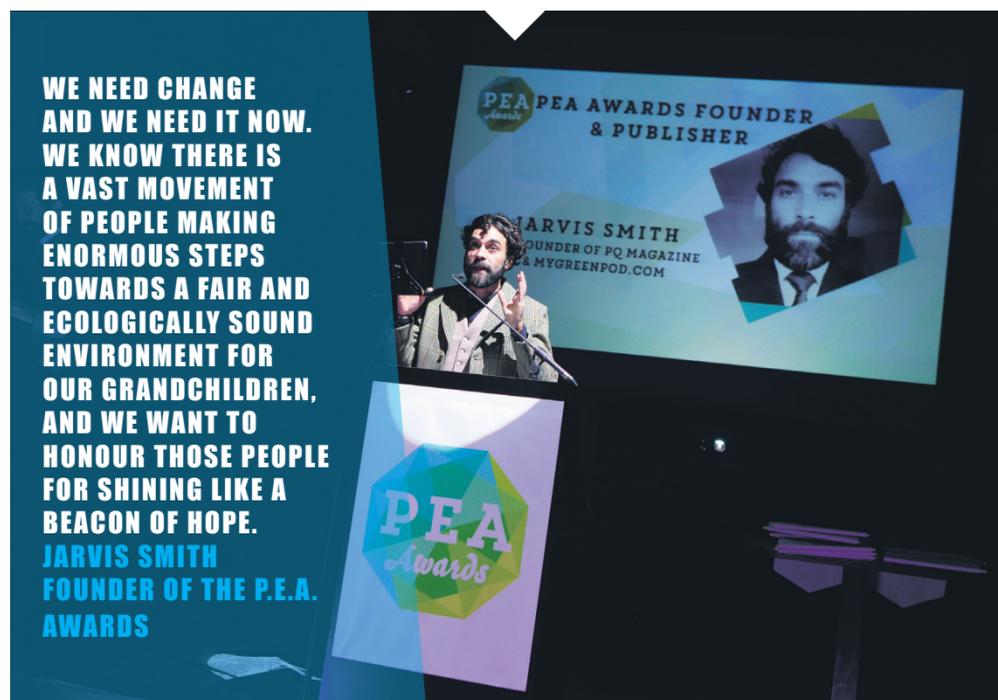
A Sustainable Development Management Strategy and Plan has now been approved by the Trust's board, and an award-winning behaviour change campaign has reached 2,000 members of staff.

An anaerobic digestion scheme now handles food waste and a new waste contract and management process means that 95% of the Trust's domestic waste is now recycled. There's also been a significant reduction in the volume of healthcare waste that's sent for incineration.

An electric van is used for on-site deliveries and a park-and-ride shuttle bus service has been set up for commuting staff and business travel, resulting in a 7% decrease in single-occupancy car journeys.

Reaching its agreed targets will save the Trust more than £300,000 per year, every year. CMFT says it 'fully intends to lead the NHS in sustainable development', and adds that 'this is only possible thanks to the commitment and vision of our leadership team'. ☒

@CMFTNHS
 CMFT.NHS.UK



THANK YOU TO ALL THE FABULOUS SPONSORS OF THE P.E.A. AWARDS AWARDS 2014

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

CARBON TRUST, ecodan, Environmental Law Foundation, Mott MacDonald, Big60Million, Yeo Valley, Interface, seacourt, SaveMoney, that's tv

AWARD: COMMUNITY



CLIVE COBIE
WOODLAND MANAGER, WOODLAND SKILLS

Clive Cobie arrived at Shadow Woods in 2000. Living and working in the woods, in the home he built himself from recycled and woodland materials, Clive spent the next eight years caring for and revitalising the woodland, developing his knowledge of traditional crafts and skills and learning about the flora, fauna and plant law around him.

Clive became a qualified NCFE Bushcraft Instructor in 2008, and has since devoted his time to developing the Woodland Skills Centre. Hundreds of individuals and groups are now able to enjoy the transformative experience of staying in Shadow Woods each year.

Clive and his team agree that the greatest reward is to see this transformation taking place – whether with a group of disaffected youngsters, corporates on leadership training, local scouts and school kids or simply families and friends who want to experience living at one with Nature.

Everything at Woodland Skills happens in rhythm with Nature. Under Clive's guidance, the team preserves knowledge and skills such as recognising wildflowers, trees and birds, making a shelter, learning to make charcoal or collecting the brambles, hazel and other materials to make a basket.

It has all been made possible by Clive Cobie's devotion to acquiring and sharing knowledge so that we can learn how to live in harmony with Nature.

'We have been working the woodland for 15 years with the aim of giving people an opportunity to learn some country skills', Clive told PQ. 'We believe that if people take the opportunity to give something new a go – and then see what inspiration they gain from the experience – it is a means to a more wholesome life. One of the reasons we were nominated was the connection to Nature visitors have felt by immersing themselves in one or more of our courses.' ☒

@WOODLANDSKILLS
 WOODLANDSKILLS.COM

AWARD: CAMPAIGNER (NATIONAL)



DR AJAY KUMAR GUPTA
MEMBER OF NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE ACADEMY NEW DELHI

Dr Ajay Kumar Gupta's on a mission to rally support for clean environmental policies in India, where he fears existing environmental laws aren't being implemented.

Toxic gases from industries, the discharge of untreated effluent waste into inland water bodies, the unregulated and heavy use of pesticides in agricultural fields and the open, unattended burning of urban and rural waste are just some of the environment threats in India.

Ajay travelled to parts of the country where pollution was alarmingly high. Undeterred by the 'initial reluctance' of officials he met, Ajay pressed harder and a campaign came together that started to unite social groups like the Rotary Club, Inner Wheel and District Environmental Club. 'I started campaigning for clean air, water, soil and food at the grassroots level in my town, Yamuna Nagar', Ajay told PQ. 'It soon spread to the entire state of Haryana – and then the nation.'

Yamuna Nagar is home to 2,000 major producers of dioxins, which belong to the so-called 'dirty dozen' group of dangerous chemicals known as persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

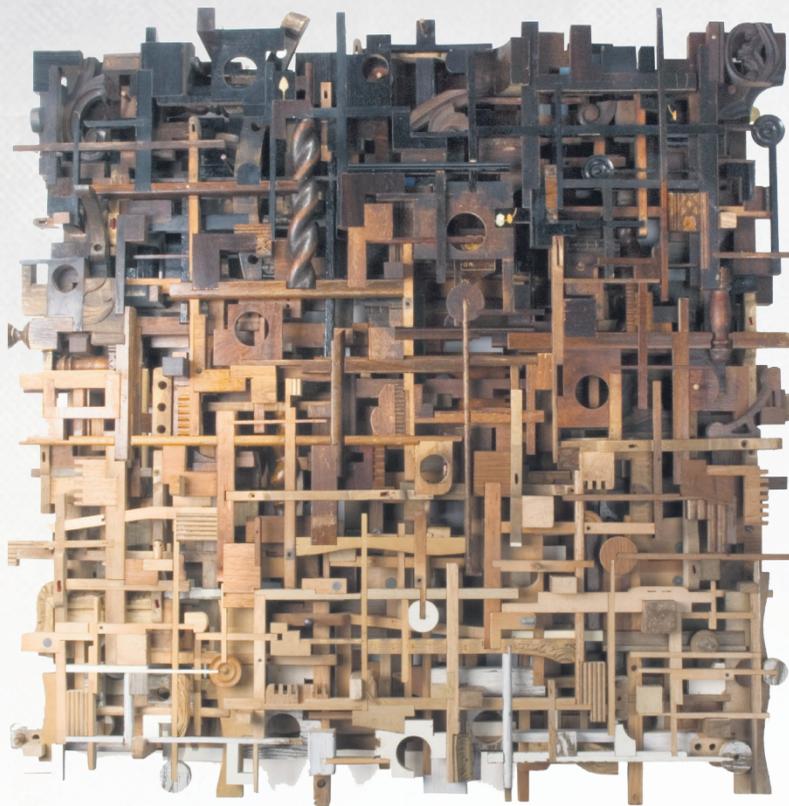
'The government officials are paying no heed to it and there are threats from industry tycoons', Ajay told PQ. He took the matter to the High Court of the State of Haryana. A similar writ in The Supreme Court of India has been filed to protect millions of schoolchildren from the toxic gases emitted in school laboratories that have no fume hoods or safety glasses.

'Awards for such efforts will give strength to persuade the policymakers to implement and enforce environmental laws across the entire country', Ajay told PQ. 'The magnitude of dreaded diseases and cancer-like cases due to environmental degradation has become so alarming that it needs support from all corners of the globe.' ☒

@KUMARGUPTA
 NESA-INDIA.ORG

ART DIVESTMENT: THE QUIET REVOLUTION

**CHARLOTTE WEBSTER, FOUNDER
AND CURATOR OF HUMAN
NATURE, ON WHY WE SHOULD
REFUEL ART WITH NATURE,
NOT OIL**



Lesley Hilling - Stoneflower

Art has always needed patrons and money, especially if we want great works to be free for all to view. However, we need to ask whether the dominance of big oil and big finance in the funding of public art is a good thing, or whether the people who run our national art institutions should look again at where they source their sponsorship money.

Art can catalyse cultural change, but sponsorship from big oil influences what art is able to say about the existential threat facing humankind from man-made global warming.

As an artist myself, as well as someone who works with organisations who are trying to make a difference in the world of energy and finance, I believe things can change. At the end of last year I founded Human Nature. It's a collective of artists from street artists to photographers, sculptors and painters, all united by the fact they're exploring our changing relationship to the environment. Our first show was a real success and we are now well on the way to establishing the UK's first dedicated platform for environmental art.

Exploring biodiversity, energy, climate change, resources and the value of Nature, the show was born from a desire to nurture creative talent and see the power of a great number of voices and perspectives pull together to help our urgent shift to a cleaner, fairer society. Oh, and it's entirely funded by ethical, green companies.



Nicola Nemeč - Distant Turbines

Indeed, it would not be happening without significant support from renewable energy and ethical investment platform Abundance.

Fossil fuelling art

Stepping back a bit, the role of fossil fuels in art has long been disputed. To some, such as Liberate Tate, Platform and Art not Oil, the fossil fuel industry simply has no place in the arts. Thanks to their persistence, in January this year the Tate was forced to release 17 years of historic figures, which showed that BP gave sums of £150,000 to £330,000 between 1990 and 2006 – an average of £245,000 a year, and a total of £3.8m.

The Tate is just one example of many, but it demonstrates the inextricable links between oil and art. The UK's most reputable gallery claims that this support will be 'reviewed' in 2016. A thorough picture of this relationship is covered in Mel Evans' new book *Artwash: Big Oil and the Arts*.

But something significant has happened in the last few months. This pressure isn't solely based on distaste for corporate control, environmental damage or unethical behaviour any more. We now have a divestment movement that's calling on every institution to get out of fossil fuels, immediately. Not just because of ethics, but because of financial risk. Spreading from educational institutions, banks, pension funds, local and national

governments, time is increasingly up for fossil fuel investments. As the issue hits the epicentre of our society, it's time to shine the divestment torch in the eyes of the Tate and others in a joined up and meaningful way, something we're in the process of working on.

The voice of art itself

I've always been a fan of art, both as an artist and through my interest in environmental, social and economic reform. Art holds a mirror up to us and celebrates the very best, and worst, of ourselves. To me, art and creativity make life worth living. Human Nature's artists span decades of experience, media and characters, but they are united in a deep appreciation of the natural world. From one of the UK's leading landscape photographers, Harry Cory Wright, to secretive street artist Jonesy and sculptor Lesley Hilling, we're now a growing collective of 25 artists with daily requests to join, attracting attention from the US to Poland and Singapore. Motivated by strong values and an ability to facilitate change, there's a growing groundswell of artists who want to be heard in the debate.

The artist who for me epitomises divestment is the true-green creative revolutionary Jonesy, whose miniature bronze sculptures can be found across the streets of London. An environmental campaigner from Wales, his 'Devil' bronze conveys the spirit and urgency of this revolution in thinking.

Another emerging powerhouse is ATM, a street artist now increasingly recognised for his distinctive bold murals of endangered birds. These beautifully intricate political statements can be seen across the UK and Europe.

But it's not just street art that's producing challenging perspectives. Nicola Nemeč, a fine artists from Northern Ireland, explores renewable energy landscapes in her latest 'Monuments' series, looking ahead and celebrating the role of a new energy era.

These artists not only allow us to examine and imagine, they also present a new visual language to communicate our layered emotional and rational valuation of Nature and the environment. The photograph of a polar bear has had its day. It is the natural world equivalent of the 'kitten image', shared without thinking, but cuteness on its own won't change the fundamentals of the world economy. We need to keep things fresh, relevant and engaging, and there is significant, evocative and complex art – both on the streets and in the gallery – that can do that.

Clare Brass, head of SustainRCA, agrees that we must be bold and visionary. SustainRCA was established in 2011 as an independent research unit at the Royal College of Art to champion the role of art and design in addressing environmental and social issues.

'In fixing the world's biggest issues it's vital we step back and look at the bigger picture', Clare



Harry Cory Wright - Landscape photographer



ATM - Green woodpecker

explains. 'When it comes to the environment, there's a huge focus on fixing problems through science and engineering, but it's only with art and design that we can create the vision that's needed to work towards a more equitable and sustainable future.' That's why, for Clare, we must emphasise enterprise and help artists and designers to create a livelihood based on socially empowered models. 'At the moment it's easier to imagine the end of the world than it is a sustainable future', Clare says, 'and that's what we must change.'

New green money

Of course the way art is funded has an impact on what it says and to whom it speaks. It's a fact, much as we might like to dispute it.

As the green economy gathers pace, we're seeing clean technology companies challenge the old guard's support of cultural institutions. First came the support of football: China's Yingli Solar was a major sponsor of the World Cup in 2014, and clean energy company Ecotricity financed its local football club, Forest Green Rovers. But is the next stop the arts? It's looking that way.

Dale Vince, founder and CEO Ecotricity, has recently started to build a collection of Human Nature art at his office in Stroud. He believes that art is a powerful voice in reflecting this urgent desire for a better way of life for us all, hugely important for its ability to articulate a vision for the future and critique the current status quo.

Bruce Davis, co-founder of Abundance, has identified a radical shift that's occurring in our culture and economy. 'We need art to do more than just show us a cynical reflection of ourselves and our consumerism', he explains. 'We need art that says something about the world we are wasting and the value that exists in Nature which we should all want to ensure is passed on to the next generations. Money and art have always been uneasy bedfellows

but we believe that supporting artists who have something powerful to say about the relationship between humans and Nature has never been more relevant.'

For Bruce, Abundance is supporting the Human Nature artists because their work will help shift our attitudes and money 'away from a dependence on fossil fuels and other forms of unsustainable economics and towards a win-win of clean, renewable energy and a healthy investment.'

Abundance isn't the only sustainable company supporting this new art wave: Ecology Building Society, Triodos Bank, Friends of the Earth, PQ Magazine, Earthborn and Liquitex paints have all recently added their support.

The future

With the decline of public arts funding and a growing need to rid the arts of fossil fuels, it's now up to individuals and the private sector to help these artists not just survive, but thrive.

We face huge challenges in how we interact with Nature, and this year the world will have to make some major decisions – in particular on climate change. Who better to explore our relationship with the world than artists?

We need to support artists who question the very essence of our humanity, explore what drives us to connect to our environment and how we're responding to Nature's call to adapt to a world of finite resources.

After all, to take the journey of change ahead we need to tap into a deep rational and emotional resource within ourselves, each as an individual, that says 'This is right. To act for the environment and shift to a more balanced way of life is right.' ✕

Human Nature is on a tour of the UK; following successful exhibitions in Leeds (April-May) and Bristol (July), the show will head to London in October. For tickets and more information visit humannatureshow.com



ARTS

Turn to p37 for a discount code that cuts £45 off the price of an adult Valley Fest ticket.



FOOD FESTS

TWO NEW FESTIVALS ARE MAKING THEIR WAY UP THIS SUMMER'S MUST-SEE LISTINGS – HERE'S WHY

It wouldn't be a real summer without a few decent festivals – and this year there are two new kids on the block. This August, RAW FEST and Valley Fest will offer two very different experiences with a focus on good, healthy fun. Here's what to expect.

Valley Fest

28-30 August

Chew Valley, Somerset

Adult weekend ticket: £120 (includes camping)

Valley Fest is the real deal – what else would you expect of a festival launched by Luke Hasell, finalist in BBC Food and Farming's Outstanding Farmer of the Year 2014?

Valley Fest is all about the family, all about fun and all about the land. For three days over the August bank holiday weekend, an organic farm in the heart of the Chew Valley, Somerset, will be transformed into a family-run festival that celebrates all things good.

This is an organic festival – from the ground up. If you want to get your chops round a famous Story burger, there's every chance its ingredients grew up on the land beneath your wellies.

There's not going to be any commercial nonsense – on the stage or on your plate – and your kids won't be pestering you to buy

gimmicky junk because, well, there won't be any for sale.

There will be something for all ages and interests – whether you (or your kids) want to get your face painted, take a balloon ride over the beautiful Somerset countryside, learn break dance and circus skills, brush up on your yoga, take in some art, eat some top-notch locally sourced food or just dance like nobody's watching.

Like the Big Daddy festivals, Valley Fest will be a jam-packed extravaganza of all-round entertainment – and you'll be able to celebrate everything you love about a great family day out without having to avoid the things you don't.

Huey Morgan from The Fun Lovin' Criminals will headline on Saturday night and a host of glitzy cabaret acts, DJs, speakers and artists will make this a weekend to remember. We think this festival will put Chew Valley on the summer circuit for a long time to come.

Visit valleyfest.co.uk for lineup and ticket details.

RAW FEST

14-16 August

New Forest, Hampshire

Adult weekend ticket: £150 (includes camping)

A festival free from drugs, alcohol and junk food is being introduced to the UK as a very different

kind of festival experience. RAW FEST (don't be fooled by the name) is already being dubbed 'the UK's healthiest clean-living festival'.

Organisers are promising a three-day 'decompression party from your every day life', and a safe haven for all ages to relax, learn, play and be creatively adventurous.

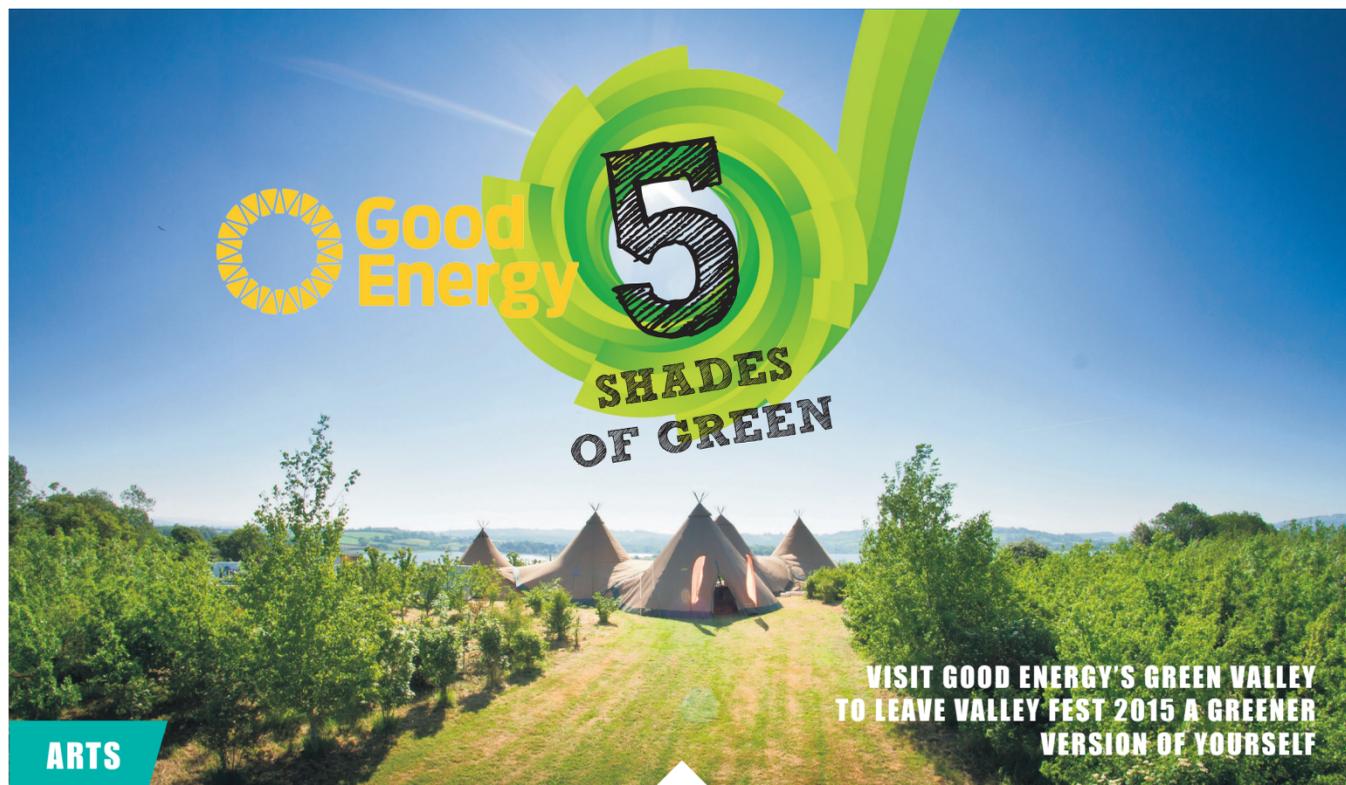
The retreat and festival will include lectures, workshops, creative live arts, music, performance, conscious film, grass games, bonfires, organic vegan and raw foods, a market bazaar shopping area, healing, massage, a pampering village, arts and crafts and lots more.

All the events are geared around consciousness, wellness and holistic, sustainable living. Russell James, Xochi Balfour: The Naturalista, Joel Gazdar of Wild Food Café and many others will be giving talks on how to live a vibrant life through organic, live foods and healthy lifestyle choices and practices.

The time at RAW FEST is about sharing information, sparking conversation and inspiring change within an open forum environment.

It's a chance to unplug from city life and get a massage, take a nap, eat vibrant food, explore, engage in a fun activity or just relax and enjoy!

Visit rawest.co to find out more about the festival and to book tickets.



VISIT GOOD ENERGY'S GREEN VALLEY TO LEAVE VALLEY FEST 2015 A GREENER VERSION OF YOURSELF

ARTS

Combine glitzy cabaret with break dance and graffiti workshops, delicious organic food and great main stage acts, and you'll see why we can't wait to get our dancing wellies on for Valley Fest 2015 (see p21 for more).

But here's the best bit: when you and your family head home after a weekend camping or glamping on organic land in the heart of the Chew Valley, the festival organisers want you to be happy, relaxed, thoroughly refreshed – and at least one shade greener.

The challenge

Five Shades of Green is an area in the Green Valley, sponsored by Good Energy, that's hosted by PQ and mygreenpod.com. Festival-goers will be challenged – and hopefully inspired – to leave up to five shades greener than they were when they arrived.

The five challenges – to be revealed at the festival – will involve enjoying the site's locally sourced organic food and drink, engaging with some of the green products and lifestyle options available and throwing your own seed bomb into a patch of organic land to help to create a wildflower haven for butterflies and insects.

'Valley Fest is a perfect platform to inspire people to think more about where their energy and day-to-day essentials really come from', said Juliet Davenport, CEO and founder of Good Energy. 'We're going to encourage people to make small changes that will contribute to a better world for everyone.'

Those who want to go even greener can

switch to Good Energy. Just like choosing to buy organic, choosing Good Energy's 100% renewable electricity is a small change you can make to support a greener future for the planet. 'We're really excited to be sponsoring the very first Valley Fest', Juliet told PQ. 'Where else can you combine good music, organic produce and switching to a cleaner, greener energy company?'

Small switch, big difference

Switching to a renewable electricity tariff could reduce the average person's carbon footprint by 24%. That means that if 1 in 10 of the 5,000 people attending Valley Fest switched to Good Energy, we'd cut CO₂ emissions by up to 498 tonnes every year!

'We know things are better when they're local and natural', Juliet told PQ, 'which is why we source all the renewable electricity our customers need from our own wind and solar sites – as well as from a growing network of more than 1,000 independent renewable generators all across the country.'

Those committing to each of the Five Shades of Green challenges will receive a prize, plus the opportunity to be interviewed and featured on mygreenpod.com.

Bio food and biophilia

A tipi in the Good Energy Green Valley will host acoustic acts and speakers including Jo Wood and Oliver Heath, who will offer lifestyle tips and inspiring ideas on everything from organic

beauty to eco-design and biophilia.

Josh Eggleton, of the Michelin-starred Pony and Trap in Chew Magna, and Toby Gritten, chef proprietor of Bristol's award-winning Pump House, will turn up the heat in the Green Valley tipi. Head over to their cooking demonstrations to find out how to make the most of local, organic produce and how to fry with flair.

If you switch to Good Energy quoting 'ValleyFest15' before 21 August 2015, you'll get £50 off a ticket for this year's Valley Fest. Once your energy supply's gone live, you'll also get £50 off a ticket to Valley Fest 2016! ✉

For more information about switching to Good Energy visit www.goodenergy.co.uk/valley-fest or call 0800 254 0000.

We've got hold of a limited number of weekend tickets to Valley Fest at a discounted price of £75 (usually £120). Visit valleyfest.co.uk and enter code 'POD75' at the checkout to redeem the offer.



WE ALL LOVE SUMMER – BUT DOES YOUR SKIN?

DR MARIANO SPIEZIA'S TIPS FOR CARING FOR YOUR SKIN IN THE SUNNY SEASON



One of the problems after a long winter spent covered in layers of clothing is that the skin can lose tone and appear pale, flabby and weak.

This is partly due to the cold; the blood vessels nearest the surface shrink, resulting in a reduced supply of blood and nutrients. This impairs the production of elastin and connective tissue.

In winter we also tend to eat more fats and carbohydrates and fewer vegetables, meaning we reduce our intake of vitamins and antioxidants.

Top tips

Here are a few steps to tone and awaken the skin this summer.

- Temperature is key! Initially, try to set the temperature to 30-32°C when in the shower. Massage the skin quite firmly with a loofah glove to activate the epidermal circulation and naturally remove dead cells. Reduce the water temperature now to make it fresh and stimulating. To avoid damaging the hydrolipidic layer of the skin, don't stay in the shower for more than 10-15 minutes.
- Dry your skin with a towel and massage in Inlight Organic Firm & Tone Oil, which is rich in vitamin E and contains a fusion of toning botanicals, such as centella, burdock and green tea, that will sink into your skin, instantly making it feel tight and revitalised. Firmly massage the oil towards the lymphatic system to move any residual toxins trapped in the dermis.
- Use Inlight Organic Body Oil with Arnica to support fragile vessels and skin that bruises easily. It provides a dual tightening and therapeutic effect thanks to its comforting, relaxing fragrance.
- Remember to include vitamin C in your daily diet, ideally by eating lots of organic fruit and veg. Alternatively, take natural vitamin C with bio-flavonoids as a supplement together with a silica and vitamin B complex.

Bring on the sunshine!

As the summer kicks in, we'll all be craving sunshine. As well as feeling great on our skin it has many positive impacts on our life, such as helping to produce serotonin (the happiness hormone), stimulating the immune system and converting vitamin D into its active form, enhancing the health of our bones.

But sun protection is important for our skin's health. During the summer the light is much more intense and we risk over-exposure to UV rays: they damage the skin by oxidising the epithelial cells (free radicals), which can lead to premature ageing.

Another risk is the loss of water due to heat, sweating and swimming in the sea. The high salt content of sea water means it dehydrates

the skin, leaving it harder, less elastic and opaque.

Natural helpers

Many recent discoveries have identified that the best free radical 'scavengers' are in the carotenoids family (red and yellow vegetables): alpha, beta and gamma carotene, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin can be taken orally or applied to the skin through good organic skin products.

Carrot, cherry, pomegranate and tomato juice are some other great friends that give summer skin a boost. Essential Fatty Acids – particularly Omega-3 and Omega-6, but not forgetting the other unsaturated fatty acid, Omega-9 – keep the skin moist and soft and reduce damage from UV rays. They're a wonder from Nature and make the skin glow.

Keep calm and... Sunbathe!

Another key to keeping your skin healthy and calm when it's exposed to the welcome sunshine lies in looking after its natural lipid barrier. Underneath your daily SPF, make sure you give your skin enough antioxidant protection to help neutralise free radical damage to the skin's collagen. You can do this by eating more yellow and red vegetables and by using oil-based skincare products that are rich in vitamin E, chlorophyll and beta-carotene.

Avoid soapy cleansers and harsh exfoliators and keep skin well moisturised and cool all day long. If your skin is very sensitive, use a body oil before you shower during the summer months to reduce stinging as the water – which often contains chlorine – hits your skin. Enjoy the beneficial sunlight but avoid direct exposure between 11am and 4pm if you want to prevent skin irritation and sun damage.

Add to your wash bag my Daily Face Oil, Body Oil with Arnica, Night Balm and Super-food Face Mask. Don't go anywhere without them! ✉

To see the full range of Inlight Organic skin products and the star ingredients that will keep your skin in top condition, visit inlight-online.com.



Luxe beauty

'ECO' AND 'LUXURY' AREN'T THE EASIEST OF BEDFELLOWS. KATIE HILL EXPLORES WHY



As a seven-year-old vegetarian I used to find all sorts of food on my plate. A chef in France once plonked a tomato (unsliced, I might add) and a matchbox of cheese in front of me, simply because that's all he had that was suitable (or that's what he said, anyway). I was brought up to consider myself lucky that my whims were being accommodated and to get on with it.

Things have changed a bit now (I've grown, for starters) so if a chef did the same thing to me today I suspect I'd respond differently. The UK has incredible restaurants dedicated to vegetarian, vegan, raw, organic, gluten-free and pretty much any other type of food or dietary requirement you can think of.

We understand the health benefits of eating produce that hasn't been messed around with and we don't mind paying a bit more for it: the question now is less about why the good stuff costs more and more about how any food can be produced as cheaply as some is.

The beauty revolution

A similar revolution has happened with beauty products. Not that long ago, it took some serious legwork to find genuine eco-friendly cosmetics – and even those you found weren't always as 'green' or natural as their manufacturers would have us believe. The ones I usually ended up with were more of the 'fragrance-free' ilk and didn't make me feel particularly feminine (or clean). They sat on my bathroom shelf with an obstinance not unlike that of the (unsliced) French tomato.

Still, the environmental argument alone has been enough to keep many of us battling on.

More often than not, commercial cosmetics use chemical-synthetic and toxic bases which, in a bid to keep costs down, carry few active and natural ingredients and contain lots of water.

Produced on an industrial scale, these products are usually sold in plastic containers. The containers, together with the synthetic chemicals in the products themselves, have a devastating effect on the environment. To top it off, many of the mainstream cosmetics brands that manufacture these products bombard us with misleading messages about what it is to be beautiful, with little regard for our health or wellbeing. We're told that miraculous products will give back the beauty we have 'lost'.

Eco-friendly products that contain ethically and sustainably sourced ingredients are obviously better for the environment (not to mention our sanity) – from the moment the ingredients

are sown to the point at which they're flushed into our water systems. They're not tested on animals and they don't test the Earth's ability to process them.

But we're just beginning to understand that there's a whole lot more going for them – and the organic beauty market's booming as a result.

Luxe healing

Organic products bring all sorts of benefits that mainstream skincare products simply can't. Yes they often cost more, but I'd be as worried about putting the cheapest products on my skin as I would about putting the cheapest fast food in my stomach.

The extra bonus with organic beauty products is that you really do get what you pay for. Natural ingredients can be healing remedies for sensitive skin, whereas the synthetic chemicals in many mainstream beauty products can exacerbate even minor irritations. The natural antioxidants found in plants can also help protect your skin from the ravages of pollution, meaning the products that contain them are naturally age-defying – the Holy Grail for cosmetics companies and most of their customers.

Top-of-the-range organic beauty products from award-winning Inlight Organic are crammed with healing flowers, precious plant extracts and luxurious oils. They don't contain artificial perfumes or chemicals and they genuinely don't need to: they're bursting with everything from rose, chamomile and lavender to cocoa seed powder and argan kernel oil. If you want to look and feel great without harming the Earth, they're a no-brainer.

Nature's medicine cabinet

Dr Mariano Spiezia, who founded Cornish brand Spiezia Organics and is now the scientist behind Inlight Organic's products, developed his first organic skincare products at a time when the cosmetics industry was rife with greenwash. There was no labelling system that could identify a beauty product's eco-credentials as the testing standard simply didn't exist (hence the greenwash). Instead, Mariano's products had to be assessed by organic food standards; the upshot was that they ended up carrying labels that identified they were literally good enough to eat (and they still are – I've tried them. Hello Chocolate Face Mask).

As a trailblazer for organic beauty – as well as being a medical doctor, homeopath and herbalist – Mariano devoted years of his life to

developing skincare products that are organic, sustainable, beneficial to overall wellbeing and bursting with Italian glamour. You can smell the sunshine and va-va-voom the minute you open a jar. His products are the result of fusing the latest scientific discoveries with the natural bounty of healing and nurturing ingredients growing all around us.

Mariano is something of a magician: the oils used in Inlight Organic's products are selected after meticulous observation of their scientific and holistic benefits, and combined with other complementary botanical extracts – all of which are made on site – to ensure maximum delivery and impact. Want to improve skin elasticity? Try a product that contains bitter cherry seed oil. Trying to slow down the ageing process? Look out for barley grass. Trying to combat a skin condition? Get some calendula on your skin and watch it get to work on anything from dermatitis and acne to sun burn and mosquito bites.

All Inlight Organic's products are handmade in small batches. Ancient techniques are applied, using colours, music, symbols and geometric and mathematical models to enrich the oils with high, harmonic frequencies. The alchemical process provides luxurious testament to the fact we look and feel our best when we're in sync with Nature and its cycles.

The squalene debate

One example is the use of squalene, which is a hot topic in the beauty industry. Lauded for its ability to keep skin in top condition, fight wrinkles and other signs of ageing and encourage the growth of healthy cells, squalene is a powerful antioxidant that's similar in composition to vitamin A. It protects against the loss of internal water – which means it has a moisturising effect – and protects the skin from UV rays.

It sounds like a miracle ingredient and it's treated like one – squalene has found its way into all kinds of face creams, serums and masks.

The science behind squalene is pretty solid; it was discovered at the beginning of the last century when a Japanese scientist was studying the incredible immune resistance of sharks. He found a special molecule, squalene, in their livers (*squalo* means 'shark' in Italian).

On further scrutiny, it was discovered that squalene is an unsaturated hydrocarbon that releases oxygen when mixed with water. With a specific gravity of 0.855 squalene is lighter than water itself, which improves the shark's

flotation by reducing its underwater body density. Nature is cleverer than any of us will ever be.

Squalene was later also found in human sebum, the fat produced by our sebaceous glands to protect our skin. The organic compound occurs naturally in the body and plays an important role in the synthesis and production of sterols, both in humans and in plants. In the human body it's the starting point for the production of cholesterol, steroid hormones and vitamin D and, when it's exposed to water or other fluids, it produces oxygen and helps the skin regenerate.

If your body's not producing enough squalene it can lead to premature ageing and dry skin. As a result, the cosmetics industry uses squalene to enhance the moisturising, antioxidant, soothing and anti-ageing performance of beauty products.

Olives vs sharks

While many cosmetics companies use squalene from deep sea shark liver oil, olive oil has been found to be one of the richest sources of vegetable squalene (200mg-12,000mg/kg) and just as effective as the shark-derived version. Because squalene also supports the immune system when used as a supplement, it's thought that the vegetable oil-rich Mediterranean diet – which is packed full of squalene – could help to prevent cancer.

Extra virgin olive oil is just one of a number of cold pressed organic oils that go into the highly nourishing base of Inlight Organic's skincare products. As with all the other ingredients, oils are only used in their complete and unrefined form in order to maintain their chemical integrity, wholeness and life force. The result is better quality and a more effective product – that hasn't involved any cruelty to animals and that instead harnesses the incredible healing power of plants.

I'll always pay more when it comes to food and beauty products because they're a solid investment and, when you think about what must be happening at the other end of the supply chain, the price of some of the products on the market is frankly terrifying. But the bonus is that the products that are most responsibly sourced and produced are now also the products that are best for your skin and that make you feel amazing. Result. ✕

To find out more about Dr Mariano Spiezia and the alchemical processes behind Inlight Organic skincare, visit inlight-online.com.

FEELING THE HEAT?

YOU SHOULDN'T NEED YOUR HEATING MUCH AT THE MOMENT – WHICH MAKES NOW THE TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT

Barbecues and sunny beaches feel like the only kinds of heating worth thinking about over summer – but this is also the best time to start thinking about your home heating.

There are more heating options available now, and renewable technologies can slash your energy bills while delivering regular payments through the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

The RHI is designed to offset the higher upfront cost of renewable technologies when compared with more established and carbon-intensive options. It offers homeowners a quarterly payment which is guaranteed for seven years.

If you want to reduce your monthly bills while also doing your bit to address climate change, an air source heat pump could be the way to go.

Heat pump 101

Almost every home in Britain already has a heat pump – sitting in the kitchen. A heat pump uses the same technology as a refrigerator, but in reverse.

While a fridge extracts the 'heat' from your food to keep it cool or frozen and rejects this heat out of the back, an 'air source' heat pump uses the same basic technology to extract low-grade heat from the outdoor air and upgrade it to the temperatures needed to keep your home and your hot water at exactly the right temperature.

The most straightforward air source heat pumps to use are called 'monobloc' systems. They're fitted outside the home and are relatively easy for qualified heating engineers to install. These heat pumps often work directly with existing heating infrastructures such as radiators, and can work in a hybrid situation alongside current gas, oil and LPG heating.

Heat pumps run on electricity but harvest renewable heat from the outdoor air; this means that for every one unit of electricity consumed, the home can receive an average of three or more units of heating. They will do this even in the depths of winter and will work efficiently down to outdoor temperatures of -15°C.

Deal with leaking heat

Like any heating system, a heat pump works most effectively in properties with high levels of thermal efficiency, so the first question anyone considering a heat pump should ask themselves is whether they need to improve their home's energy performance.

To qualify for the RHI, the government's Green Deal Assessment insists that you undertake basic improvements, such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and double glazing, before installing a heat pump. Both the heat pump and the installation must also be approved under the government's Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS).

Once you've looked at your home's thermal efficiency, an air source heat pump will almost certainly cut down your running costs and significantly reduce your carbon footprint.

Whatever the home, as long as it achieves modern levels of insulation and thermal efficiency, there is almost certainly a heat pump to suit it.

The cost calculator

There are so many variables that it's impossible to say exactly how much you could save if you install a heat pump. The size of the property will affect the capacity you need (and therefore the cost of the unit) and the savings will depend

on the efficiency of your current system.

Still, data from the Building Research Establishment (BRE) – the UK's leading centre for independent advice for the built environment – suggest that heat pumps can offer significantly lower running costs compared with conventional fossil fuel systems and direct electric systems.

Mitsubishi Electric has developed an online heat pump selection tool to help anyone with an interest to get an insight into what this technology could offer for their home.

The calculator estimates how much a heat pump could save in running costs and carbon emissions against gas, oil, LPG and direct electric heating, and illustrates what the RHI payments would be.

Eat al fresco undisturbed

Modern systems like Ecodan offer advanced controls including wi-fi internet operation, automated weather compensation and intelligent room sensors, which make heat pump heating easier for homeowners.

Ecodan is also the only air source heat pump that's been accredited by the Noise Abatement Society. It's been awarded its 'Quiet Mark' certificate, so you won't notice it working away in the background.

Remote energy monitoring now comes as standard on every Ecodan that leaves the factory, which Mitsubishi Electric sees as a key way of demonstrating the efficacy of the Ecodan range. [x](#)

Visit ecodan.co.uk to use the heat pump calculator and get an idea of the savings you could make.

Charcoal's all well and good, but imagine if, the next time you had your mates round for a barbecue, they sizzled their own steaks on lava quarried from the foothills of Mount Vesuvius.

As well as being a showstopper of a talking point, cooking food on hot stones – or in this case lava – seals in the nutrients and flavours and means you can cut and cook every mouthful exactly as you want it.

Hot stone cooking

'I got shouted at by an angry French chef for ordering my steak how I wanted it and not how he dictated', recalls Nick Metcalf, managing director at SteakStones. 'I figured there must be a way to cook your food how you like it, live at the table, and to eat it piping hot.'

And indeed there is: Nick discovered that the solution was to cook on lava.

When heated to 280-350°C, in an oven or on the hob, a lava 'stone' will retain a sizzling heat for 20-30 minutes. You can cook your own steak, scallops, sausages, spring onions or just about anything else on your own personal sizzler – on the table, right in front of you – to your own taste and without the drawbacks of cooking on a traditional barbecue.

Reinventing the barbie

The most common problem with barbecuing is that the outside of the food can burn before the inside has had chance to cook. Cooking on lava transfers the heat without the flames; your food's cooked right through and you don't risk mistakenly believing it's ready just because the outside's browned.

While you have to wait for the flames to die down before you can cook on a charcoal or wood barbecue, the lava stone in the SteakStones Kamado Smoker & Grill (pictured below right), which has cooking times similar to those of a conventional grill, allows you to start cooking as soon as the fire is lit.

'You still get a beautiful sear and the tasty caramelisation on the outside of your steak,

sausages or vegetables, but none of the unpleasant charring', Nick explains. 'Of course if you want a little flame there is still room around the outside of the stone to add this.'

The dry, searing heat seals in the natural flavours and juices of your food so you don't need to use extra oils and fats. 'Rather than losing all the goodness into the fire', Nick explains, 'all the flavours, tenderness and moisture are seared inside the meat, fish or vegetables – without anything getting overcooked.'

Cracking it

The Hot Stone Cooking Association (HSCA) advises that volcanic rock is the only natural stone that can withstand direct and sufficient heat to provide a 'pleasant cooking experience'.

Following a volcanic eruption, molten lava cools extremely quickly and forms an incredibly tight bond that makes it very resilient. 'Our lava is the only stone that can be heated directly on a flame without any risk of cracking', Nick said.

The compact stones are set in a bamboo board as a personal platter or a sharing plate that can be used in homes, gardens or restaurants. The stones are simply lifted out and heated to the required temperature before being reset when they're ready. Alternatively the stones can be frozen and used to serve chilled fruit platters or ice cream.

For the love of lava

The lava used in SteakStones products comes from the foothills of Mount Vesuvius in Italy, and the company plants olive trees for every cubic metre of molten rock used.

'Essentially, our product is given to us by the very Earth we live on in one of its most spectacular displays of volcanic eruption', Nick told *PQ*. 'We make sure we don't take but that we also give back.' [x](#)

To see the full range of SteakStones products and recipe ideas that will help you make the most of them, have a look at steakstones.com.

COOKING ON LAVA

FORGET THE BARBIE – EMBRACE HOT STONE COOKING AND YOU'LL NEVER BURN ANOTHER BANGER

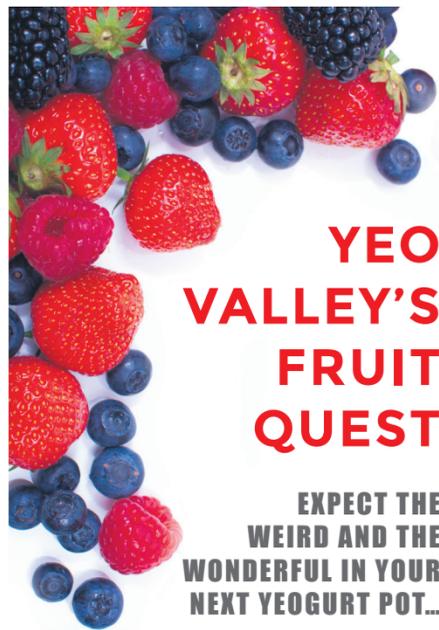


SteakStones Kamado Smoker & Grill

Turn to p36 for your chance to win a Kamado Smoker & Grill (RRP £1,000). The first 25 *PQ* readers who order the Kamado Smoker & Grill will get it for £750 (plus VAT) – enter code 'SSPQ750' at the checkout.

Mount Vesuvius, Italy.





YEO VALLEY'S FRUIT QUEST

EXPECT THE WEIRD AND THE WONDERFUL IN YOUR NEXT YEOGURT POT...

If you missed out on Yeo Valley's lip-smacking Norfolk Strawberry yoghurt this summer, we sympathise.

The limited edition flavour was made from special Florence strawberries grown on the Sandringham Estate by Melton & Sons, a British family farming business. It was like a little pot of Wimbledon, but with less of the 'Argggghhhhh!'

Growing fruit in the UK can be a tricky business and for Yeo Valley, getting hold of enough of it – from certified organic sources – is harder than you might think. The Special Edition Norfolk Strawberry yoghurt was only available for a few weeks; Yeo Valley simply couldn't source enough organic British strawberries to keep it going longer.

To bridge the gap and mix things up a bit, the family farm's now on a mission to find new sources for the organic fruit used in its scrumptious products – as well as less traditional fruit for new concoctions.

Calling all organic fruit growers!

If you or someone you know produces certified organic fruit that's exotic and unusual or tasty and traditional, it could become Yeo Valley's next bestselling flavour.

Yeo Valley's Fruit Quest is good news for yoghurt-lovers because it means a raft of exciting limited edition flavours could be hitting the shelves soon – and it's great news for organic fruit growers as their produce could be the stars of the new recipes.

If that's not enough, it's great news for everyone else, too, because the Fruit Quest will give a nice juicy boost to organic agriculture in the UK, and will help to make organic produce available to everyone.

British family farming

Buying organic produce for Yeo Valley 'Yogurt' (which translates to 'organic and then some') is just one of the ways in which Yeo Valley supports other British family farms.

'Global food production is under pressure in a way it never has been before', explains Tim Mead, owner of Yeo Valley. 'With Britain only 60% self-sufficient in food production, we need to be prepared for the challenges this will bring to us in the UK. At a time when there are so many questions being asked about the chemicals used in human food production, we need to support our British organic fruit growers to ensure they can supply pesticide-free food for us in the future.'

And Yeo Valley's quest doesn't stop at fruit. 'Yeo Valley was founded with the purpose of supporting British family farms. By working with local organic farmers the Yeo Valley brand was born – as was the OMSCo Co-operative that supplies all our milk to this day', Tim told *PQ*. 'Supporting organic dairy is another important step towards improving the security of healthy nutritious food for all of us – not just

now but for generations to come.'

Supporting organic agriculture

The organic blackcurrants used in Yeo Valley's limited edition 0% Fat British Blackcurrant Yogurt all came from Anthony and Christine Snell's family farm in Herefordshire. The flavour was so popular that it's been added to Yeo Valley's main line in a slightly more luxurious whole milk version.

'We've got very good soil and just the right climate which helps us grow all sorts of soft fruits, including strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries – as well as blackcurrants', Anthony explains.

The best climate for blackcurrants is here in the UK, where they've been grown for centuries. Still, growing an organic crop isn't easy; 'You have to hand-weed everything and you don't get such high yields', Anthony says. 'But the feeling that you're working in harmony with Nature is very satisfying. The most crucial thing is to take good care of the soil – if we look after it, it'll look after us.'

For Anthony, dealing with the weather is the hardest part of his job. 'Climate change is upon us and we are getting longer periods of more challenging weather to contend with. There are so many things that can go wrong in fruit farming and we worry a lot about getting a good crop when the weather conditions aren't right, but we have to try and work with it.'

To show just how serious it is about supporting family farms like the Snells', Yeo Valley has put its money where its mouth is. It recently acquired its very own fruit business, Yeo Valley Fruits, which serves as a store for all the hidden supplies of delicious organic fruit that are discovered. ✕

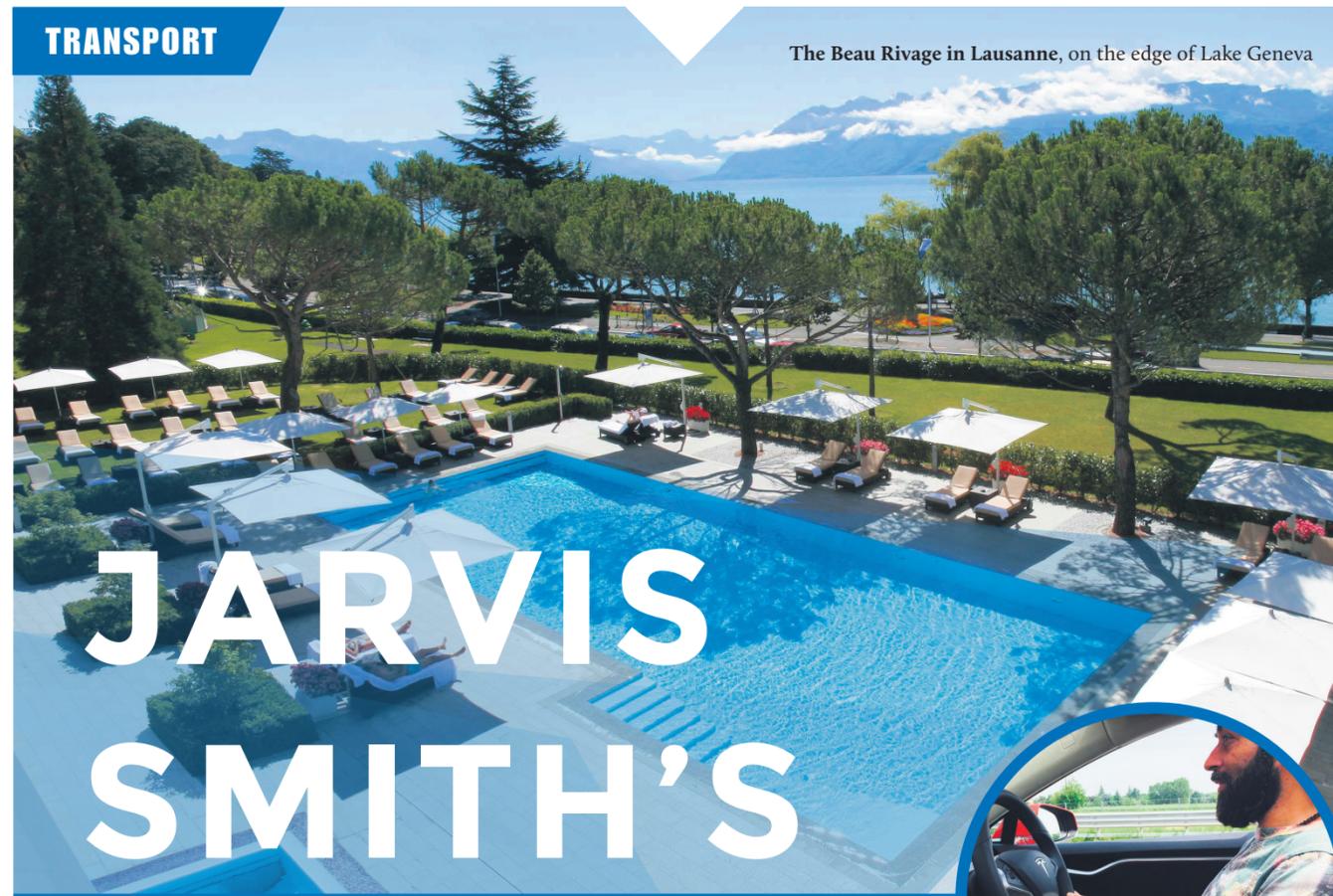
For more information on Yeo Valley's Fruit Quest and how to get involved, visit yeovalley.co.uk/fruitquest.



FOOD

TRANSPORT

The Beau Rivage in Lausanne, on the edge of Lake Geneva



JARVIS SMITH'S

TESLA ROAD TRIP

THREE DAYS, THREE COUNTRIES - AND NOT A DROP OF FUEL



When you're going on holiday, planes are always a temptation: they're quick, convenient and cheaper than many forms of transport. There are also some destinations you simply can't reach any other way. But on top of the carbon emissions, jumping on a flight means you can end up missing out on all the breathtaking surprises hiding 35,000 feet beneath that thick layer of cloud.

If there's any way to get where I'm going without taking to the sky, you can be sure I'll choose it – and if the journey can be made without using a drop of fuel, it's a no-brainer. For me, driving a Tesla P85 from Milan to Gatwick, through Geneva and Paris, was the

holiday highlight of my year.

There are a few important things to mention. I did the driving, and my beautiful fiancée and co-pilot did all the translating and speaking. Brittany Ferries played an Oscar-winning role for the Channel crossing, providing a brilliant and delightful way to travel back to Britain.

One rule only

On day one we collected the P85 from the Tesla showroom in Milan. It was, of course, a fiery Italian red – something my beloved had annoyingly guessed beforehand. I had predicted black or grey (to me all Teslas are black or grey – and usually guided by the hand of James Bond's

cooler brother).

This journey was about enjoying the sunshine, the mountains, the food, the wine and, of course, each other – with the smallest carbon footprint possible. Road trips have a tendency to serve up opportunities and surprises that can't be squeezed into the boring and predictable journey through an airport.

Road trips allow – and invite – spontaneity; you can decide where to stop, when to stop and which snake pass mountain road to take. You can even decide which view you'd like to enjoy while you take a pee. There's just one rule: every 270 miles we needed to be at a plug socket or charging station to recharge the Tesla's battery and have a rest.

Teslas and Ferraris

We'd decided to drive straight from Milan to Geneva: it was a three-and-a-half-hour journey of just under 200 miles. Our destination was the Beau Rivage in Lausanne, on the edge of Lake Geneva. It's one of the country's finest hotels in one of the country's finest settings.

There is something about the Tesla that makes me feel quietly excited. It's a strange feeling, one that I've never felt from any other car. Its quietness keeps me calm, but the life force that gets you from 0-60 in 4.2 seconds (2.8 seconds if you have a ludicrous speed upgrade on the four-wheel drive P85D) creates inner excitement.

Surrounded by Ferraris in the centre of Milan, I knew this was going to be fun! We headed out of town quickly and efficiently; the satnav in this car is extremely accurate – and the huge screen means you'll rarely miss a turn. Once we hit the highway we could see the glorious snow-capped mountains – what a treat. We glided off with huge grins in our silent electric chariot.

All aboard the car train

Never, for one minute, did I imagine having to board a car train and be taken on a 20-mile journey through – yes *through* – a mountain. This was becoming really magical. I couldn't think of many new modes of transport that would help cut our energy use, but the gods had served this up and it was a wonderful experience. We boarded with great big smiles, dipped the seats back and relaxed in the dark as we were drawn into the heart of the mountain. How does it get better than this?

After we drove off the train we had a 40-minute

journey of absolutely stunning scenery before reaching the palatial Beau Rivage, a breathtaking 19th-century hotel. We pulled into the driveway about an hour before dinner, which gave us just enough time to enjoy a glass of fizz and sweet, fresh strawberries as we admired the lake and mountains from our extremely privileged vantage point.

L'Accademia

We tried the snazziest and newest of the hotel's restaurants, L'Accademia. It was right on the lakeside, just a short stroll through the sweet mountain air. The Italian menu featured classic dishes bursting with local ingredients; I'll never forget the perfect *al dente* pasta with fresh pesto and wild garlic flowers.

Our waiter recommended a local white wine as a perfect dancing partner, and it was absolutely delicious. I couldn't decide which dessert to have, so I opted for a café gourmand while my gorgeous wife-to-be went for the cheeseboard. The selections – in both cases – were delicious and extremely indulgent.

I've stayed in some pretty cool places in my time, including the grandiose and ostentatious, and if I'm honest a beach hut in Goa is where I'm happiest. But this suite was pretty special; as I watched Katie lounge on the sofa sipping the last of the champagne we both agreed we could get used to this!

Rush hour in Lausanne

An early rise to a glorious sunny day and breakfast on the famous terrace. Now, if Carling made breakfasts... We sat for hours grazing and feeding the birds, gazing out at those snow-capped hills and feeling very happy indeed. We knew we had the bulk of the drive to do today, but the 336-mile journey ahead – plus the one-hour stop for a charge along the way – wasn't enough to move us from the poolside before 5pm.

With hindsight we might have left a little earlier, but we were high from the fresh air – and still full from breakfast – so we didn't stop to think that this could be rush hour.

We sat in traffic for nearly two hours on our way out of Lausanne, but in this Tesla nothing

mattered – we just sang, danced and drove. I got to open this baby out on the wide and fast roads through France: 150mph feels like driving at 60 in my Nissan LEAF – just with blurred lines.

Driverless tech

This P85 had upgraded tech features compared with the last Tesla I drove, and scarily it nearly drives itself on the motorway. It keeps its distance from the car in front, tells you – with a modest shudder of the steering wheel – if you come out of your lane and speeds up when you indicate and overtake.

I love how cars are evolving; some say it will make us lazy and this may be true, but the new driverless technologies that will stop simple accidents from happening must be a good thing. Let's not stop to consider computer hackers at this point, we're having too much fun!

Just after midnight we reached our last European stop on the road: the rapid charging station at hotel Ibis, just outside Paris. We had a decent room in an extremely convenient location, making this a perfect place to recharge (ourselves and the car!) before the final 127 miles to Le Havre the following morning.

The way to travel

The ferry crossing to Portsmouth and the last leg of the journey – from the coast to Gatwick – were both great. Alongside walking, cycling and EV driving, Brittany Ferries offers one of my favourite ways to travel. It was a smooth crossing and we had a cabin to stretch out in after we'd enjoyed a coffee on the deck.

With a feast for all the senses, this journey was what living is all about. I don't think humans were ever meant to travel at the speeds reached in planes – why do you think we get jet lag? Some say it's the time difference, but I beg to differ. If energy and matter are not travelling together we get out of sync and it can take us a few days to reunite spirit with body.

If this resonates and you know what I'm talking about, the P85 is the mode of transport for you. If it doesn't, you might be convinced by the fact that this beast of a machine looked just as at home as those Ferraris as it wound through the streets of Milan. ✕



BRITTANY FERRIES

Crossing the Channel by boat is one of the most convenient ways to get to mainland Europe – and you don't need to be driving a Tesla P85.

We took our Nissan LEAF on the Pont Aven to visit family in Névez, and have also driven a LWB VW Crafter on the Armorique in a hunt for antique Breton furniture – covering an unbelievable 700 miles on less than £80 of diesel.

Crossing prices with Brittany Ferries start at £165 for a car in August and September. Visit brittany-ferries.co.uk for the full schedule and prices.

Both the LEAF and VW Crafter were courtesy of the brilliant Greenhouse Leasing group. Find out more at greenhouse.co.uk.



The Tesla satnav plots our course to Geneva



GET BACK TO NATURE

TAKE TIME OUT TO ENJOY THE TOWNS, DOWNS AND COASTLINES IN AND AROUND BRIGHTON & HOVE

Inspired to take a trip to Brighton?

Turn to p36 for your chance to win a two-night stay for two in Brighton, complete with dinner, a tour and passes to the city's main attractions.

This October, the P.E.A. Awards (see pp8-13) will celebrate its fifth birthday in Brighton & Hove, following a four-year run in London. Why? Well, because as well as being home to the UK's only Green constituency, Brighton Pavilion, the city is at the forefront of the eco-tourism movement – and we want to give you an opportunity to experience it.

With streets bursting with circus performers, magicians and musicians playing everything from bikes to bongos, you won't need to worry about entertaining the family – the chances are the entertainment will find you.

Potter through the interconnected 'city villages', each of which has its own unique character and style, to find local produce, one-off works of art and great bargains. The Lanes and North Laine have an incredible range of independent shops, market stalls and cafés, selling everything from vintage clothes to ice cream.

The city is pretty compact and easy to walk around, but there's a great bus service if you need help with all your bags. It's also easy to hire a bike and take in the sights on two wheels.

Here's just a taste of some of the things that have put Brighton on the map for conscious travellers and eco-shoppers from all over the world, and that we think you'll enjoy as well.

Food

You'll find a great place to eat on every corner in Brighton – and the competition has kept standards very high. There are restaurants and cafés that cater to all dietary requirements and culinary preferences – from juiced ginger to curried goat – so you won't be stuck if you decide against fish and chips on the beach.

Silo, the zero-waste restaurant on Upper Gardner Street, uses a pre-industrial food system that delivers 'quality through purity'. All food is created on site using ancient and modern techniques that deliver real food and real tastes. Silo trades directly with farmers, and chooses local ingredients that themselves generated no waste.

The restaurant's compost machine turns all scraps and trimmings directly into a compost that's used to produce more food.

The Brighton & Hove Food Partnership also deserves a mention; it's a not-for-profit organisation that delivers a range of community projects, such as cookery courses, community food growing and all sorts of great events and workshops.

The Downs

Brighton & Hove is surrounded by the South Downs National Park: 1,600 square kilometres of England's most valued lowland landscapes in one of the busiest parts of the UK. It's the UK's newest National Park, and it truly has it all: rolling hills, glorious heathland, river valleys, ancient woodland, thriving villages and market towns and the iconic white cliffs of the Heritage Coast.

Head out into the South Downs for a Woodland Session with So Sussex; during a day in the woods you'll learn how to design and construct your own camp, create a fire pit and start a fire. Other So Sussex activities include guided hikes and bike rides, mushroom walks and tree climbing.

The 'Breeze' bus service will whizz you up to the Downs for £4.50 return (up to two children under 16 can travel free with every adult).

Biosphere

Brighton & Hove is one of the UK's five 'biospheres', which are part of an international family of 'Biosphere Reserves'. These reserves span over 100 countries and are recognised by the United Nations body UNESCO as international sites of excellence for meeting our needs and improving our environment.

The Brighton & Lewes Downs Biosphere covers almost 400 square kilometres of land and sea between the River Adur and the River Ouse, bringing together the three environments of countryside, coast and city and towns.

Events

The Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition – on loan from the Natural History Museum, London – will be at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery until 06 September 2015. This world-renowned exhibition is the most prestigious photography event of its kind, showcasing the natural world's 100 most astonishing and challenging pictures. It's definitely one for your diary.

On 15-16 August, the 34th Brunswick Festival will take place in Brunswick Town, Hove. Organised by a group of volunteers and local residents every August, the festival presents a programme of free and fun activities for locals and their families and friends. ✉

For more things to see and do around Brighton & Hove, have a look at visitbrighton.com/countryside/home and visitbrighton.com/get-back-to-nature



THE TREEHOUSE AT HARPTREE COURT, SOMERSET

JARVIS SMITH VISITS THE UK'S FLAGSHIP TREEHOUSE

'When a picture really does paint 1,000 words, it's better to keep quiet. One thing I must say, though, is that if I had to choose a way to live this would be it: in the treetops with my family, the birds and the sweet smell of laurel.'

'Thank you to Linda and Charles Hill, two fantastic hosts who have stayed true to their vision – and wow have they pulled it off. If you're lucky enough to get a booking, it's worth heading to the Harptree Treehouse for the homemade granola alone!'

JARVIS SMITH



This fabulous, sky-high en suite bolthole is beautifully handcrafted and filled with beautiful things. Up the stairs and across the walkway, the sumptuous Harptree Treehouse awaits you in all its glory.

For bookings and availability, visit canopyandstars.co.uk.

Win a stay at Harptree Treehouse

Fancy a one-night stay for two at the Treehouse at Harptree Court? Turn to p36 for competition details.

One-third of the way across the South Atlantic from Africa to America, in one of the emptiest oceans in the world, lies an extraordinary sliver of Britain. And in the middle of the sliver is a micro-slice of France.

Named after the Saint's Day on which it was discovered – five centuries past – by astonished Portuguese sailors, St Helena is one of the world's most remote inhabited islands. But it doesn't always feel that way. Walk up Main Street in Jamestown, the 'capital', and you'll find much that's familiar – if a little out of time.

On the one hand you can imagine yourself in a Devon market town from the 1950s: the pace of life's easy, with people gossiping on benches outside their whitewashed houses. On the other hand young men sport shades at the wheel of their 4x4s, flush from a spell of work on the military bases on Ascension Island or the Falklands, bass-heavy music hammering out of their stereos.

The middle of nowhere

First, though, you have to get there. In 2016 St Helena's first airport will open – and the island will be tugged sharply into the 21st century. For now, unless you own a yacht, you'll spend five days and nights sailing out from Cape Town on the 'Royal Mail Ship St Helena'. Like the island, it's one of a kind. Virtually everything that travels to or from the place does so on the

'RMS': people (living and dead), fridge freezers, cars, food... It's the island's sole lifeline – and the last in a line of ships built specially for the task.

The journey is a combination of the banal and the wild, with Bovril for elevenses, quiz nights and deck cricket – all with the wide, wild immensity of the blue sea all around, unblemished from horizon to horizon. The RMS strikes out far from the nearest shipping lanes, settlements or even flight paths. A hundred, a thousand, a million years ago, the outlook beyond the rail would have been the same. This really is the middle of nowhere.

Next year the RMS will be pensioned off and the first tourists will be jetting in from Johannesburg to a spanking new airport which, the government hopes, will catalyse economic development. It's a big ask.

Napoleon and the stars

St Helena is a dependency in more than one sense of the word. Once a vital staging post on the journey east – before the Suez Canal stole its rite of passage – it's now largely a subsidy economy. Many of the 'Saints', as the islanders refer to themselves, work for the government, or in government-owned businesses. Boosting tourism is key to prospects of a more independent, sustainable economy. And there is much for tourists to see.

Napoleon's six years here – between Waterloo and his death in 1821 – already act as a tourist



Flax-covered slopes from Diana's Peak



Watering endemic plants in the nursery



St Helena Wirebird

draw. The few acres comprising his house and tomb were given to France when Britain sought favour from Paris in the mid-19th century, and there is even a French consul general in residence to keep watch over this tiniest corner of *La République*.

The isolation that made St Helena suitable for tucking away an ex-Emperor attracts another sub-species of tourist: stargazers. Far from any source of serious light pollution, the island has a quite astonishingly clear night sky. Stand in a valley sheltered even from the scattering of street lamps, and the stars seem so close you could almost pluck them by hand. Small wonder plans are afoot for it to become an official International Dark Sky Park.

As for the landscape...

For a small island, the countryside is impressively varied. Starting from the coasts, bare, wave-lapped cliffs rise to arid grassland and, in some cases, strips of rocky desert. The odd waft of sand serves as a reminder of a primeval sea floor, when the ocean was hundreds of metres higher than it is today.

This gives way to pasture – much of it bare, overgrazed and, in places, scarred with the red-earth gashes of gully erosion. There are swathes of quite English-looking countryside: hills and valleys intercut by winding, flower-banked lanes, a mix of pasture, plantation forest – pines, eucalypts – and vegetable gardens. Clinging to the ridge line of Diana's Peak and Mount Actaeon is the cloud forest – a tangle of tree ferns, bracken things and weird-looking, weirdly named spindly shrubs – 'he cabbage' and 'she cabbage'.

It's certainly cloudy, but it's hardly forest: few of the trees are as tall as a man. It was once grander and may be so again, if the sterling conservation efforts come good.

Below the cloud forest, ever threatening to overwhelm it, is a vast blanket of flax – the pervasive relic of a Victorian attempt to inject a sense of industry into island life. Like most enterprise on St Helena this was a government-backed initiative; it provided the raw material for mail bags and a (barely) living wage for the islanders. The mills shut down in the '60s but the flax remains, swallowing the ground, the big daddy of all the island's (many) invasive species. From a distance it looks like a gorgeous sea of

green, but beneath its photogenic surface it quietly smothered the native flora.

Plundering paradise

Passengers on the RMS are issued with leaflets on 'biosecurity' in an effort to keep the endemics clinging on. It's an uphill struggle. Old prints show that, by the time the landscape was first recorded, it was already stripped bare of most of its original vegetation, the tree ferns and hardwoods that had once cloaked the land. The lethal combination of man and goat had done its work.

Despite discovering the island the Portuguese never settled there themselves; instead they built a chapel, planted fruit trees and left behind goats, pigs and sick sailors who were left to recover in what must, briefly, have been a tropical paradise of clear flowing streams, fruits and forest.

The forest was raided for timber and fuel – and the goats, of course, stopped it from coming back. A typical pattern: man cuts, goat hoovers. In the face of such an onslaught, it didn't take long for the forest to fail.

When the English came in the 17th century they carried on the despoliation. One visitor wrote of seeing a thousand goats in a single field: with that strength in numbers the trees never stood a chance. The English tried to conserve the dwindling 'Great Wood' by building a wall around it. But the goats persisted, and the forest shrunk to isolated remnants, clinging on in crevices and high peaks.

Wirebirds and blushing snails

Conservationists remain optimistic that much can still be salvaged. With the support of the Department for International Development, the airport developers are restoring wetlands and helping with the creation of a 'Millennium Forest' to replace the Great Wood. Careful flax clearance is uncovering native species which, with impressive stubbornness, spring back to life. After years of retreat, the cloud forest is slowly gaining ground once again.

It's not just conservation for the sake of it, either. Eco-tourism is a key part of the island's offer, and with good reason. Dolphins, whales,

whale sharks and bright blue angelfish circle the shoreline. St Helena has 50% of the UK's endemic species, though few are of the charismatic megafauna (or flora) variety.

Instead, it's a case of watch where you tread. Many are tiny: invertebrates skulking somewhere in the grasses, the coyly named blushing snail sliming along the tree ferns and the odd unremarkable flower or two. But there are more striking specimens, including the island's unofficial emblem, the wirebird. This cute little plover, much preyed by cats (feral and pet), is now fiercely protected. Cat traps are laid to catch prowling moggies: the pets are returned to their owners, the ferals put to terminal sleep.

Swap ships for planes, 4x4s for EVs

Replacing a ship with a plane hardly sounds sustainable, of course – but in terms of carbon it's a close call. The environmental costs of feeding and fuelling a hundred or more people for a week at sea on a 30-year-old ship are far from negligible.

But for more decisive sustainability gains, the island needs to exploit its own resources. It's recently opened a small solar farm to take advantage of all that tropical sun. When completed, it could supply 40% of the island's power needs – replacing the diesel which, of course, has to be shipped in. There's a longer term prospect of combining more solar with ocean thermal power in order to move close to self-sufficiency. If islanders could be persuaded to swap their gas-guzzling 4x4s for electric vehicles, that could take it a step further down the sustainability track, as could converting some of the grazed-out pastures to vegetable gardens and horticulture.

None of this will come easy. Much depends on tourist dollars boosting government coffers – and on the 'Saints' themselves discovering an enthusiasm for sustainable enterprise. If those go together, St Helena could yet serve as an exemplary case study for small island sustainability the world over. ☒

Martin Wright is a writer and photojournalist specialising in environmental solutions and sustainable futures. @martinfutures



ST HELENA

MARTIN WRIGHT TAKES A ROYAL MAIL SHIP TO ONE OF THE WORLD'S REMOTEST INHABITED ISLANDS

TRAVEL

GETTING THERE

The RMS St Helena's last voyage will depart from London on 14 June 2016. Discover the World offers holidays to St Helena, including travel on board the RMS St Helena until Spring 2016. It will also be one of the first UK tour operators to offer a travel programme to the island when the airport opens. Find out more at discover-the-world.co.uk



WIN: A £150 GATHER&SEE VOUCHER!

Three lucky winners will receive a £150 voucher to spend online at gatherandsee.com, on anything from on-trend silk dresses to beautiful organic cotton basics, elegant handbags and handcrafted jewellery. Gather&See has everything you need to create an ethical wardrobe without compromising on style.

As well as having a great story to tell, each of the ethical brands showcased on Gather&See also fits into at least one of the company's six founding principles: Fair Trade, Organic, Recycled, Eco-friendly, Handmade and Small Scale Production.

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015



WIN: A PAIR OF BOURGEOIS BOHEME SHOES!

Bourgeois Boheme (BoBo), the ethical footwear brand for men and women, is giving away a pair of sustainable shoes with a contemporary twist. The winner will be able to pick from the full range on bboheme.com.

Bobo's collections are always vegan, ethical and eco-friendly. They're made in Portugal by talented artisans using the finest faux leather and natural materials. By stepping out in your Bobos you're showing compassion to the environment and animals – and showing that sustainable fashion looks (and feels) great!

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015



WIN: VIP TICKETS TO THE PEA AWARDS!

Want to help celebrate the UK's green heroes at a glamorous green carpet event? We've got just the ticket – well, 10 tickets, actually! Five lucky winners will receive a pair of VIP tickets (worth £180) to this year's P.E.A. Awards in Brighton.

The ceremony will celebrate the trailblazers of sustainability over an evening of great food and entertainment. Expect street artists and magicians, a three-course vegetarian meal, lashings of organic gin and a live set by the Stereo MCs to mark the P.E.A.s' fifth birthday.

Deadline for entries: 15/09/2015



WIN: INLIGHT ORGANIC BODY OIL WITH ARNICA!

Inlight Organic's award-winning Body Oil with Arnica restores the skin's balance and leaves you feeling silky smooth and hydrated. It contains arnica, apricot kernel oil and vitamin E-rich evening primrose oil to rejuvenate and nourish. Add to that plantain, calendula and patchouli – all prized for their ability to promote skin cell regeneration.

We've got 10 100ml bottles of Inlight Organic Body Oil with Arnica to give away. As with all Inlight's products, they've been lovingly hand-crafted in Cornwall using 100% organic ingredients.

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015



We've got our hands on a bunch of prizes – plus a couple of exclusive offers – 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 giving away their products and services so you can have a go and see what you think.

We've hand-picked this selection of green pearls – from festival tickets and eco-breaks to sustainable fashion and a hot stone grill – to help you see out the summer in style.

No catch. No pressure. Just enjoy.

You can view more details of our prizes – plus all our competition giveaways and 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!



WIN: A STAY AT THE TREEHOUSE AT HARPTREE COURT!

Soak in style in the copper bath or catch a treetop sunset on the veranda at Harptree Treehouse. There's a sumptuous double bed, a kitchen and a spacious living area with a wood-burner, Persian rug and leather armchairs. It's low impact, but reaches new heights for luxury treetop glamping (see p33 for more).

Sawday's Canopy & Stars – a one-of-a-kind collection of cabins, shepherd's huts, Gypsy caravans and, of course, fabulous sky-high treetop escapes – is offering a one-night stay for two at Harptree Court.

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015



WIN: A STEAKSTONES KAMADO SMOKER & GRILL!

If you enjoy smoking, searing, grilling, barbecuing or just cooking with some flare (but without the flare-ups), the Kamado Smoker & Grill offers the perfect year-round solution.

Whether you're barbecuing your burgers, sausage, steaks or chicken, slow cooking your legs or shoulders of pork or lamb, smoking your ribs, briskets or salmon, the unique, super-high controllable heat (up to 450°C) will add hours of fun and flavour to your culinary experiences.

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015

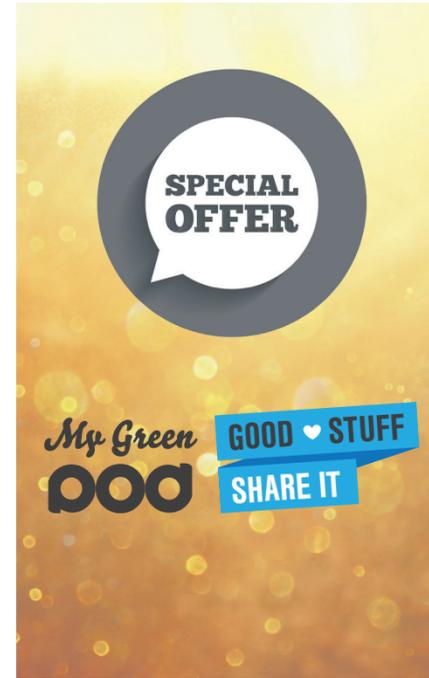


OFFER: VALLEY FEST DISCOUNTED TICKETS

Valley Fest is all good – from the ground up! For three days over the August bank holiday (28-30), an organic farm in the heart of the Chew Valley will be transformed into a family-run festival packed with glitz, glamour and great local organic food (see p21 for more).

We've got an exclusive offer for *PQ* readers: book tickets at valleyfest.co.uk and enter code 'POD75' at the checkout to get a ticket for £75 (usually £120).

To Book: Head to valleyfest.co.uk



OFFER: RESILICA SINK AND GROOVE DETAILING

Resilica is a bespoke worktop and surface material that's handmade in the UK from 100% recycled glass waste. In a typical kitchen worktop, approximately 700 recycled bottles are used to create a hard-wearing, low-maintenance surface.

Resilica is offering *PQ* readers a free polished sink and drainage groove detail (worth over £400) with every order, valid until 31 October 2015. Quote offer number 'PQ15/2' with any correspondence.

To Book: Head to resilica.com



WIN: A 'GET BACK TO NATURE' BREAK!

Fancy getting back to Nature in one of the UK's greenest cities? Visit Brighton is offering a two-night stay for two people at Jury's Inn Brighton, plus an evening meal for two at acclaimed vegetarian restaurant Food for Friends.

You'll receive a 48-hour city bus pass that will let you explore the city and the South Downs, plus passes to the city's main attractions, including the Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museum & Art Gallery. The prize also includes a two-hour, two-wheeled tour of the city with Brighton Bike Tours.

Deadline for entries: 30/10/2015



WIN: AN ECO-BREAK!

Triodos Bank is giving you the chance to enjoy a three-night stay at The Battlesteads Hotel, the greenest hotel in Northumberland. Nestled in the picturesque village of Wark, the hotel is one of only two to hold a Gold Award from the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

It has a carbon-neutral heating and hot water system, and polytunnels in the extensive gardens provide fresh fruit and vegetables for the kitchen throughout the year. Organic toiletries are locally sourced, and the wormeries turn kilos of food waste into compost.

Deadline for entries: 29/08/2015



VISIT MYGREENPOD.COM/COMPETITIONS FOR FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.



THE SEARCH FOR GREEN HEROES

5TH BIRTHDAY PARTY – 03.10.2015



AWARD CATEGORIES

**BRITAIN'S GREENEST FAMILY, BUSINESS, ENERGY, SHOPPING,
BEST INDIVIDUAL, CHARITY/NGO, MONEY, TOWN/CITY,
BEST TEAM, COMMUNITY, NATURE, TRANSPORT, BUILDING,
EDUCATION, PRODUCT, TRAVEL/TOURISM**

ALL CATEGORIES ARE FREE TO ENTER AT PEAAWARDS.COM

Closing date for entries: 23.59, 31 August 2015

Tickets are limited and start at £50 per head for a delicious three-course vegetarian dinner (with drinks)

VENUE:
Brighton Centre,
Brighton Seafront
DRESS CODE:
Black Tie



THEME:
Revolution
AFTER-AWARDS ENTERTAINMENT:
The Stereo MCS



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