



Sustainable Ideford - Our alphabet is not at C for Christmas. However we all want to try to reduce our environmental footprint over Christmas when the potential for over consumption and mass shopping is high. So here are a few suggestions:-



Presents

While it's tempting to go overboard when it comes to Christmas gifts, it's worth resisting if you want to be more conscious of your impact on the planet and how ethically gifts are made. Check out your Christmas present list. With so many under the pressure of time or money suggest kids only Christmas presents or a Secret Santa for the wider family.

Cards

It is estimated that one billion Christmas cards end up in the bin each year. Try culling your list or consider donating what you would have spent to a charity instead. Make sure you recycle your received cards after Christmas or recycle them as labels for next year.

Wrapping

Use last years recycled paper or buy a recycled variety of wrapping paper or simply wrap presents in brown paper and a reusable ribbon or natural decoration. Alternatively try Furoshiki - the Japanese art of using fabric, scarves and even tea towels - to wrap your present. *Lots of ideas for this on You Tube.* Maybe invest in some colourful fabric squares for wrapping future gifts. These can be retained by the receiver or returned to the giver *and used again and again.*

Lights

Lessen the impact of Lights. Consider solar powered or Led options to minimise the energy needed.

Trees

If you choose to buy a real Christmas Tree make sure it's grown in Britain. Look out for the British Tree Growers Association mark or FSC certification. If you buy a rooted tree and look after it well your tree can be reused for years to come.

If your Christmas tree is fake try and make it last for 10 years.

After Christmas, if your tree does not have roots, make sure it is recycled and turned into wood chips. Check with Teignbridge Council website for details.

Food

Use low carbon ingredients such as sprouts, cabbages, leeks, pears and cranberries all of which are seasonal in December. Buy locally when possible.

Minimise waste. Buy only what you need; be creative with leftovers and if you've bought too much give what's spare to local food banks. HITS (Homeless in Teignbridge Support) in Kingsteignton or THAT Foodbank in Newton Abbot.

Try not to buy disposable plates and cutlery but ask your guests to bring their own.

Go easy on the cling film (it can take 10 years - hundreds of years to decompose).

Decorations

Avoid plastic accessorised and glittery decorations on your wreath or tree.

Avoid sequins on your Christmas outfit (they are made from pvc and there are no biodegradable substitutes). Crackers - try to make your own. They are often shipped from China and filled with plastic items that will get thrown away.

Stop and think: Do we need this? Is it sustainable? Is there a better option?

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas from your Ideford Sustainability Group: Dom, Jill, Jim, Liz, Rob and Robin and we would love you to come and join our group in the New Year.