

10 Ways To Green Your Office and Home This Christmas

1) When buying gifts, try to avoid items that are excessively packaged.

Around 125,000 tonnes of plastic packaging are thrown away over Christmas - that's the equivalent weight of more than 50,000 festive polar bears!!!

2) Recycle all those empty cans and glass bottles from your Christmas parties.

Parties and presents account for a 30% increase in the number of bottles and cans binned. Use the can and glass recycling facilities at the University (glass recycling banks are located outside the Hawthorns) or put them in your black box! This Christmas the UK will consume almost 5.5 million jars of mincemeat, 12 million jars of pickles and 6.5 million jars of cranberry sauce all packaged in glass, but only a small percentage will get recycled. The weight of all these jars is equivalent to the weight of 59,500 Santa's, weighing an average 18 stone each. And if all these glass jars were recycled, it would save enough energy to boil water for 60 million cups of tea!

3) Switch off all lights and non-essential equipment when you go home for the Christmas break! Nobody is going to be here to use it!

Last Christmas Day the University used about 55% of the electricity it would usually use on a busy term day at a cost of around £3,500!

4) Recycle your Christmas cards by placing them in your black box or taking them to a local WH Smith or Tesco. Alternatively, save them to make gift tags next year!



Royal Mail delivers around 150 million cards and packets during the pre-Christmas period. It is estimated that up to 1 billion Christmas cards (17 for every man, woman and child) could end up afterwards in bins across the UK. If all the Christmas cards were laid end to end they would span from London to Sydney and back more than five times!

5) Buy rechargeable batteries.

Millions of batteries go to landfill every year. Recycle batteries using the Bristol black box scheme.

6) Reuse envelopes to send internal mail.

The waste created in Britain over Christmas is equivalent to 400,000 double-decker buses, stretching all the way from London to New York City! And even though over half of this waste could easily be reused or recycled, almost 90% will actually end up in the dustbin.

7) Compost your brussel sprout trimmings and carrot tops.

You could reduce the size of your bin by over 20% and that's a lot of composting just waiting to happen! For information on obtaining a home composting bin see <http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/recycling>.



8) Don't throw away used wrapping paper - recycle it or save it for next year!

It is estimated that over Christmas as much as 83 sq km of wrapping paper will end up in UK rubbish bins, enough to cover an area larger than Guernsey or enough to cover Hyde Park 33 times!

9) When you're out shopping take a canvas bag or plastic bags that you already have at home.

We use eight billion plastic bags each year; more than 300 for every household!

10) If you have a 'real' tree in your home, please recycle it when Christmas is over.

Many retailers such as Focus DIY and local garden centres will take back your tree for recycling. Alternatively contact Bristol City Council's recycling helpline on 0117 9031221. Over six million Christmas trees were bought in the UK last year, most of which were thrown out after the festivities, creating over 9,000 tonnes of extra rubbish, almost five times the weight of the London Eye! If you have a tree with roots plant it and use it again next year!

