

DECEMBER 2022: CHRISTMAS  
EDITION

# SUSTAINABILITY AT CHRISTMAS TIME

**WRITTEN &  
EDITED BY**

Hollie Proctor

Ellie Moore

Filip Otreba

Daniel Obazee

**(Spanish  
Translator)**

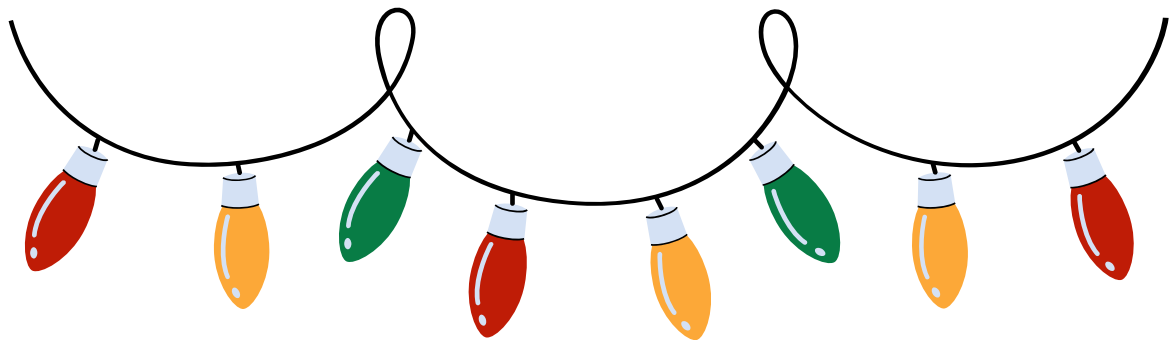


Christmas is a time of joy, giving and happiness. We at St Thomas Aquinas firmly believe this should apply to our planet too! Christmas can be tough on the environment. **Household waste typically increases by a whopping 30% during the festive period.** It can also be tough on our local community - money doesn't grow on trees. With this in mind, we have created a selection of articles to help you be more sustainable and equitable this Christmas.

Enjoy!

---

La Navidad es un momento de alegría y felicidad. ¡Aquí en Santo Tomás de Aquino, creemos que este placer debería expandirse por el mundo también! La Navidad puede ser dura en momentos. **Los desechos domésticos suben por un 30% en los festivales.** También puede ser duro para la comunidad local si no crecen árboles. Con esto en mente, hemos creado una selección de artículos para ayudarte a estar más cómodo esta navidad.



***¡Feliz  
Navidad!***

# Contents

Interview with *Climate Hero* Alisdair Irving

*Refuweege* Gift Appeal

Sustainable Tree Decorating

No snow? No problem - step by step DIY snowman decoration

**Wrapping Waste!** Reduce - Re Use - Recycle

Christmas Clothing Collection

Food Frenzy: How to make your leftovers go the extra mile



**Alistair Irving, Operations Manager at the St. Enoch Centre, winner of the international Green Apple Award for environmental best practice, is known as a climate hero!**

St Thomas Aquinas has been offered an excellent opportunity to work with him by using spare shopping space in the St Enoch Centre for Sustainability Projects. Read on to find out more...



**What inspired you to choose a sustainable career path?**

It was not really inspiration- it's **necessity**! Part of my job is to protect and increase the value of the asset. If I do not include sustainable improvements to the site, there is a threat that the site could become a stranded asset that is impossible to sell.

**You are known for your contribution towards environmental health. What are some pledges our school could make to become a greener institution?**

- 1) **Plant trees.** This helps offset your carbon footprint. But make it worthwhile too by planting self-pollinating fruit trees. You can get apple, pear, plum and cherry trees that flourish in Scottish weather, and then eat the fruit! By eating just 1 more item of fruit a day, will reduce on high carbon footprint and unhealthy snacks, and are great for you too.
- 2) **Reduce and Reuse!** These are the top 2 priorities of the recycling hierarchy, and must always be investigated before recycling. Eg. Using refillable water bottles cuts down on plastic bottles, cups and straws, and helps you rehydrate for free! Scotland has one of the purest waters in the world.
- 3) **Recycle.** With the Deposit Return Scheme going live in Scotland on 16th August 2023, you can make a difference! From then on, 20p will be charged on every single plastic/glass drinks bottle and aluminium can, to encourage people to deposit them in DRS facilities and get the 20p back. This is to stop these items going into general waste and into landfill. By starting to collect now, and storing, the school can make a big contribution to stop the waste, AND make some money to use in a school sustainability project.

**If someone asked you for your top 3 sustainability tips, what would you tell them?**

- 1) **Save electricity:** it's easier than you think! Replace all florescent lightbulbs with longer lasting, lower energy LED lights. They are brighter too! Also, swich off lights and other electrical devices when not in use. Reduce the air conditioning by 1 degree. It all counts!
- 2) **Save water:** are the urinals flushing 24/7?; are taps all "push taps" that dispense a measured amount of water?; are cisterns low volume or do they need a float or brick added to reduce water consumption?
- 3) **Reduce plastic:** a great way to stop using plastic bottles, cups and straws is to use reusable water bottles.

**Our school is keen to collaborate with you by using the space St Enoch Centre is offering to contribute towards sustainability. Do you have any suggestions for how we could best use this space?**

- 1) **Sell sustainable products** eg reusable water bottles, reusable and sustainable shopping bags etc
- 2) **Sell "Slow Fashion"** products, designed and made by the school
- 3) **Collect donated items** to re-use for sustainable projects
- 4) **Collect aluminium cans, and glass/plastic bottles** in advance of the Deposit Return Scheme



# Refuweegee

## Christmas Appeal

**Refuweegee is a community-led charity which gives Glasgow's refugees the warm welcome they deserve. They put together welcome packs of essential items, gifts and 'letters fae the locals'.**

## Refuweegee

(ref-u-wee-gee)

*noun* - A person who upon arrival in Glasgow is embraced by the people of the city, a person considered to be local.

*see also Glaswegian -*

*We're all fae somewhere*

Christmas can be difficult for many. It is expensive and it is often not sustainable – new things are purchased in plastic wrappings, often to be forgotten about and wasted.

What if we told you that YOU could gift give, in a sustainable way, to some of Glasgow's most vulnerable people?

<https://www.refuweegee.co.uk/your-donations>

This link provides info on the kinds of donations the charity seeks. If you think you could possibly spare something this Christmas, any donation would be cherished. For those who enjoy writing, a letter welcoming Glasgow's refugees could be the difference between a lonely and a merry Christmas. To give either of these items to Refuweegee, please see Ms Nimmo in English before the end of term 😊



# Decorating Disasters - Don't damage the planet decorating your Christmas Tree!

Do it the **SMART** way - sustainably, merrily, artistically, radiantly and **TINSELLY**



“

"Sustainable British Christmas Trees, delivered to your door, supporting local charities."

”

## Trees & Decorating the **SMART** way

Sustainable Christmas Tree company 'Green Elf Trees' are going the extra mile this festive period to ensure the most vulnerable are cared for.

Not only are the trees sourced 90% less environmentally damaging than plastic Christmas trees; proceeds from the sale go to a partner charity supporting Ukrainian Refugees.

If you haven't already got a Christmas tree, why not have a look?

Decorations can be costly in more ways than one. Our purses are stretched and our environment suffers when materials – especially plastic – are overpurchased.

To bring some festive sparkle to STA this year, help us decorate the sustainable way.

Ask your parents/carers for any decorations they are willing to donate or were going to throw out. Get crafty and make your own decorations – tinsel using recycled paper, painted leaves from the park...whatever you want!

These can then be donated to classrooms and offices to brighten up the place and stored for future decorating opportunities.

# Sustainable Decorating: Step by Step Sock Snowmen!

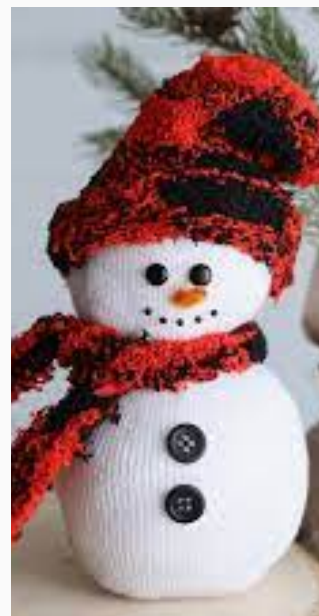
*No snow? No problem!*

## MATERIALS

1. A white tube sock (or more, depending on how many you would like to make)
2. Coloured sock/s (for the hat)
3. Rubber bands (or thread)
4. Rice (for filler)
5. Glue and black pen
6. Buttons for the nose - we have tried different buttons but feel free to adapt (the tip of a wooden skewer painted orange works very well!)
7. Optional decorative socks

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Start by filling your white sock with rice. You will need a hefty amount (we were quite surprised to see how much rice can go into one sock).





2. Once you are happy with the amount (and size) of your sock snowman tie the top with the rubber band
3. Take another rubber band and place in the middle – more to the upper side – of the rice filled sock to form the head shape.
4. Now glue the buttons to the front facing side.
5. Draw the mouth and eyes with a black marker or with black paint.
6. Decorate as you please!! Glue your chosen nose on, cut your decorative socks up to make a little ribbon shaped scarf and tie it round, place to toe part of the sock on its little head to keep it warm and cosy (can secure with glue or leave loose for removal), even use some pink pen to give it rosy cheeks! Get creative.



# WRAPPING WASTE!

What do do with wasted wrapping paper.

Every year, miles of paper is WASTED as, let's be honest, what is done with the paper torn off of Christmas presents? It's put in the bin.

Why waste when you could create?

Instead of buying wrapping paper, first consider making your own. All households as well as STA recycles paper - paint or draw over this to create your own unique paper to envelope your gifts with.

Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle; apply this method to gift wrapping. Tear more carefully and use wrapping paper AGAIN the following year.

This also applies to Christmas Cards.

Thought they are beautiful and well intentioned, they come at a cost to our precious forests. Keep and cut up old cards to make scrap books, collages or even stick to your handmade wrapping paper to impress your loved ones.

Turn waste into creativity at Christmas time.



Every year, miles of paper is WASTED as, let's be honest, what is done with the paper torn off of Christmas presents? It's put in the bin. Why waste when you could create?



# CLOTHING COLLECTION

STA

## HOME EC.

Spare clothes that no longer fit? New clothes and not enough room to store them? Items you haven't worn for a long time? Struggle no more STA has the solution! The Apparel exchange clothing donations bin in the Fashion Textile room allows pupils/the STA community to donate any clothing items for ages 5-18, which Home Economics then pass on to Apparel Exchange.



## FASHION TEXTILE ROOM

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

They make up clothing packs for those who need them most and also re sell items so they don't end up in landfill. Including items that need mending – so no waste!

See the Home Economics department for more info.



GIVE BACK AT STA





## Reducing festive food waste

AT CHRISTMAS,  
AN INCREDIBLE 5  
MILLION  
CHRISTMAS  
PUDDINGS, 2  
MILLION  
TURKEYS, AND 74  
MILLION MINCE  
PIES SUCCUMB  
TO THE SCRAP  
HEAP WHILE  
STILL EDIBLE.

## OUR TIPS

### STA SUSTAINABILITY

1. Don't shop when you're hungry and always have a list
2. Only buy and cook as much as you need
3. Make your festive treats from scratch
4. Make space in your freezer for leftovers
5. Freeze leftovers quickly and move anything near it's use-by date to the freezer
6. Learn a new leftover recipe this year, it might just become a favourite!
7. Share surplus food
8. Use your food waste recycling bin - don't forget to check your collection days!

<https://www.urbanroots.org.uk/freefood/>

Follow this link to access a map of Glasgow's food banks and consider making a donation to help those less fortunate this festive season.



STA NEWS

# MERRY SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS

*We look forward to seeing you all again  
in the New Year.*

