WEST CALDER CLUSTER

MONTHLY SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

OCT - ISSUE #2



Upcoming Events

- FRIENDS OF ALMONDELL COUNTRY PARK VOLUNTEER SESSION, 7TH NOV,ALMONDELL COUNTRY PARK
- PEOPLES EMERGENCY BRIEFING SCREENING - KIRKNEWTON VILLAGE HALL, 6TH NOV FROM 7-9PM
- PEOPLES EMERGENCY BRIEFING SCREENING - WEST CALDER COMMUNITY HUB,15TH NOV FROM 3-5PM

Welcome to the second edition of the West Calder High School Cluster Sustainability Newsletter.
This newsletter has been created for the families, children and young people across our cluster schools, from ELC through to secondary.

Throughout the academic year, we will share eight editions highlighting the exciting sustainability projects, learning opportunities and community initiatives taking place across our schools.

This edition includes contributions from colleagues in Education, Transport, Ecology & Biodiversity, Waste Management and Community Regeneration.



Let us know what you think

West Lothian Council



Waste Management Halloween Recycling



PUMPKINS

With the shops full of plastic pumpkins and fake spider webs that can't be recycled, don't make your Halloween the stuff of nightmares for the environment, check out these top tips to conjure up an eco friendly Halloween!

Did you know that 12.8 million pumpkins are bought just for decoration during Halloween and are never actually eaten? That's a lot of energy and water used up just to throw away in the brown bin - and that's before your pumpkin is then recycled!
When carving your pumpkin this year save the seeds and off cuts from the bin and make some tasty recipes instead. Have a look at the Love Food Hate Waste website for some pumpkin inspired recipes like soup and pumpkin spiced muffins.

Remember: If you do need to throw your pumpkin away, don't let it go to waste in the wrong bin, make sure to recycle it in your brown bin (if you have a permit!) so it can be turned into new compost and fertiliser, or add it to your home compost heap – be sure to remove any candles first!

Instead of buying more of those dastardly decorations from the shops, why not make your own using what you already have around the house? Have a go at these recycled sock pumpkins which not only recycles those pesky odd socks but your decoration can also be reused again year after year. By buying less and reusing more you are reducing how much waste you're producing in the first place, helping to keep our resources in the cycle for longer. You will find the instructions on our website: https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/89633/Games-and-Activities

ALUMINIUM RECYCLING- THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

Did you know that you can recycle your aluminium sweet wrappers in your green bin – just make sure you've eaten all the sweeties first! Unfortunately other plastic crisp and sweetie wrappers need to go in your grey bin as they can't be recycled in your green bin due to the mix of materials – or you could take them back to your local supermarket and look for the soft plastic recycling station.



OCT - ISSUE #2





Active & Sustainable Travel in Schools

SCHOOL PROJECTS - LIGHT YOUR MOVE

We are excited to announce that the new Love To Ride Travel Tracker will launch week beginning the 2nd of November.

Love to Ride motivates parents and students to choose sustainable ways to get to school by making it easy, fun, and rewarding.

Through an engaging, challenge-based platform, schools can make active travel easy, fun, and rewarding. Students track their journeys, celebrate progress, and build everyday habits—from biking and walking to scooting and public transport.
Every trip counts. And together, those small choices add up to cleaner air, healthier students, and lasting behaviour change that extends far beyond the school gate.

From the 2nd to the 6th of November schools will complete a Travel Snapshot to collect baseline data. There are no prizes, no rankings and no goal to beat. The data gives schools a baseline to understand current travel habits.

We then move into our first challenge week - Light Your Move which runs from the 9th -20th November.
Light your Move is an Active Travel challenge to motivate and inspire pupils to travel using different modes of transport to school by walking, wheeling, cycling, scooting, skating or park and stride in November.

This challenge also celebrates "Safe people on the Move" which is the road safety campaign in November. Be bright, be seen, be safe and Light your Move!
To support this, each school received high-visibility stickers (primary) & snap bands (secondary) to distribute to pupils.

E BIKES & SCOOTER INFO

Police Scotland is urging people to be cautious when buying electric bikes or e-scooters this festive season, as some models may not be permitted for use on public roads.



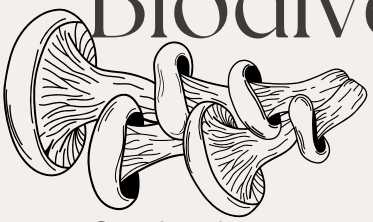
E-bikes can legally be used on public roads if they meet specific requirements, including that the motor should not be able to propel the bike when it is travelling more than 15.5mph and must have a maximum power output of 250 watts. Vehicles that exceed these limits are motor vehicles and are subject to the Road Traffic Act, meaning the rider must hold a full UK driving license, have insurance, and wear an approved helmet. Failure to comply with these legal requirements could face enforcement action under the Road Traffic Act.

E-scooters, however, are not permitted on public roads, pavements or other public spaces, as they do not meet the necessary legal standards. Their use is only legal on private land with the landowner's consent.

So if you are buying an e-bike or e-scooter this Christmas, please check its specifications to ensure it complies with legal requirements.

OCT - ISSUE #2

Biodiversity and Ecology



FUNGI FORAY



October is a great time to go on a fungi foray! Get out to your local park, woodland or grassland and look out for some of our amazing mushrooms and fungi and submit your records through iNaturalist or iRecord.
Old trees, fallen branches and dead wood are great places to find interesting species of plants and animals. Fungi play an important role in our ecosystems, helping to break down organic matter and cycle nutrients back into the soil, supporting healthy habitats and plant life.

Get involved with #WaxcapWatch
Plantlife runs #WaxcapWatch, a citizen science project that encourages people to look for and record waxcap fungi? These colourful fungi are often found in grasslands and can be an indicator of healthy, species-rich habitats. You can take part by recording the waxcaps you find and uploading your sightings.

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES: SPOOKY FUNGI

With Halloween just passed, why not see if you can spot some of our more unusual-looking fungi?

Look out for Dead Man's Fingers (Xylaria polymorpha) – a dark, finger-like fungus often found growing on dead or decaying wood – or the aptly named Candle-snuff Fungus (Xylaria hypoxylon), which can look like tiny white candles growing from fallen branches and stumps.

How many different fungi can you find in your local park or woodland this autumn?

Remember: never eat wild fungi unless you are an expert at identifying them. Many species can look very similar, and some are poisonous.



