

HOW CAN WE BE KINDER TO OUR PLANET THIS CHRISTMAS?

Re-use cards and wrapping. Help reduce the huge amount of trees that go into making Christmas tags by re-using old Christmas cards. Recycle the section that carries the greeting, cut out the picture and use that as a tag. You could use fabric remnants and ribbons to make simple, drawstring gift bags in various sizes. Use these for your family and close friends and they could be reused for years to come. Recycled brown paper has a much lower ecological footprint than Christmas wrapping paper. Could your church display one card from each person?



Gifts – Try to avoid ‘stuff’ that people don’t want. How about tickets to an event or a promise of some time? Consider ethical toiletries, plants/seeds or food, something made from recycled materials, a sustainable alternative to single use items or even a charity gift. You could combine a bar of fairtrade chocolate with a charity gift of cocoa trees (or some other combination).

Decorations – Buy decorations that you can reuse or use natural materials such as holly and ivy. If you have a real tree, remember to recycle it with the Farleigh Hospice collection service <https://www.farleighhospice.org/events/christmas-tree-recycling-2>

Food – Try to include more vegetables and vegetarian food. Store leftover food in reusable pots or wax wraps (not cling film) and find recipes to use it up. Don’t forget to boil up the turkey carcass for some delicious stock for soup or casseroles.

Crackers – Avoid crackers with plastic toys that will just be thrown away. You could even try making your own.

Dim the lights but not the joy! – If buying new lights, consider LED or solar versions.

Buy locally - [The Art Place Chelmsford](#) Meadows Shopping Centre, Chelmsford. 75 percent of the money goes back to the artist, 25 percent to the charity Ideas Hub who helps a lot of people in need.

Support charities

<https://embraceme.org> Shop ethically with our range of unique gifts, many of which are Fairtrade, fairly-traded or eco-friendly. All proceeds help support our Christian partners in the Middle East as they work to transform lives and restore dignity for excluded and marginalised communities.

<https://www.goodgifts.org> Good gifts that offer practical help for people in need in the UK or overseas. You can buy a goat for a community recovering from the effects of war, an hour’s respite for the carer of a disabled child or provide hearing tests and hearing aids for a child in Africa.

<https://www.worldlandtrust.org> Donate £5 to plant a tree. The world loses the equivalent of 31 football pitches of forest every single minute.

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<https://www.chelmsfordcircuit.org.uk/>