

POETS?

Odes, Sonnets, iambic pentameter? Keats, Coleridge, Kipling? No. The acronym **POETS** = **P**rotecting **O**ur **E**nvironment **T**ogether.

Art Group member **Anne Hardiman** contributed the following *Reflections* to St Andrew's Roundhay weekly Newsletter "in the hope that we may Praise God by caring for the world He gave us and Love our Neighbour by sharing the world's resources."



Anne hopes these *Reflections* will be shared far and wide. She welcomes contributions, comments and queries by email to grannianni1@hotmail.co.uk.

If I don't need it so why buy it?

Do I really need to buy more bottled water? Now I have 1 or 2 bottles, I can refill them with lovely tap water.

It's a bargain in The Sales but will I actually use it?

Do I really need to buy dusters when I have lots of bits of cloth I can use?



Switch to loose tea?

Many if not most teabags contain plastic. One study showed that 11.6 billion microplastics and 3.1 billion nanoplastics per teabag are released into the environment. At brewing temperatures these can be released into the tea itself. (*McGill University*)



You could be drinking glue, bleach and other chemicals. (*Henrietta Lovell, The Rare tea Co.*)

Even paper-based teabags require the felling of trees.

Some manufacturers are moving towards plant-based plastic which is better but may still not be compostable.

Go back to soap?

Globally, every year around 120 billion plastic bottles are used to package handwash products but bars of soap can be bought in packs using very little plastic or just paper/cardboard wraps.

Handwash refills are available but they generally come in plastic packs.



The chemical structure, heavy processing and petroleum content of handwash detergents are more damaging to skin than soap.

The molecular structure of soap outperforms antibacterial handwash whilst protecting the skin (*2015 Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy.*)

Soap can contain natural fats. Do try and avoid those containing Palm Oil.

Buy a big one?

I weighed one 2 litre plastic drinks bottle = 42 grams. Then I weighed one 200 ml plastic drinks bottle = 14 grams. This indicates that buying 2 litres of liquid in 10 small bottles would use 140 grams of plastic.

That's means you bought 3 times more single use plastic compared to buying it in a larger bottle. And it cost you more.

Buying the biggest container possible will, in effect, use the least plastic.

Think: shampoo, salad cream, washing up liquid, Ad Blu, etc...



Thinking about Fashion?

1. Emissions and Landfill

Each year in the UK a million tonnes of clothing is disposed of and 20% of these clothes end up in landfill.

The fashion industry is responsible for 8-10% global carbon emissions... more than aviation and shipping combined.



British shoppers buy more clothes than any others in Europe. More than 40% of the 16 to 24 age group buy clothes online at least once each week. This compares to 'only' 13% of other age groups.

Reducing the fashion industry's carbon footprint "is key to limiting global warming". (*The UN.*)

Buying a maximum of 8 items of clothing per person each year would reduce fashion emissions in major cities by 37%.

2. Cotton

One pair of jeans requires 10,000 litres of water for its manufacture. Cotton is a very thirsty crop. "We are unwittingly wearing the fresh water supply of Central Asia."

The Aral Sea was the fourth largest freshwater lake in the world. It is now almost all desert as the rivers that fed it have all been diverted to irrigate cotton farms.



Fertilisers and pesticides cause extensive pollution. Cotton is the most heavily sprayed crop in the world.

Organic Cotton

- has a 91% lower water consumption rate
- creates 46% lower emissions
- demands 62% less energy

3. Fast Fashion and Synthetics

Fast fashion is the production of cheap mass-produced clothing, now using massively increased amounts of synthetic textiles.

Fast fashion companies release new lines weekly, encouraging over consumption.

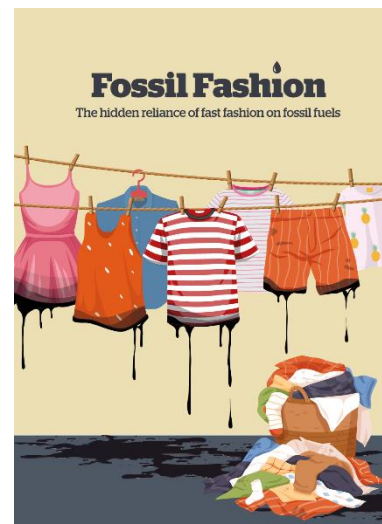
Consumers buy 60% more clothes than 15 years ago.

The average Briton reportedly has 57 unworn clothing items.

342,000,000 barrels of oil each year are used to make synthetic fibres.

Clothing manufacture dries up fresh water supplies and pollutes rivers with poisonous chemicals.

85% of textiles end up in land fill. Separation of the various synthetic fibres, zips, buttons are not (yet) feasible.



Laundering synthetics like polyester releases 500,000 tons of microfibres each year into the oceans.

Fast fashion employs around 75 million factory workers. It has been estimated that less than 2% make a living wage.

On a positive note, we can

- opt for brands that use organic/recycled materials.
- prioritise quality over quantity.
- donate to and buy from charity and vintage shops.

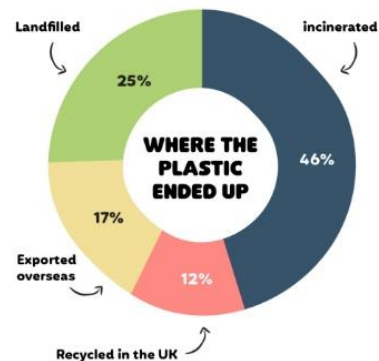
Join in The Big Plastic Count

The UK produces more plastic packaging per person than almost any other country in the world.

Follow this link <https://thebigplasticcount.com/> to **The Big Plastic Count**.

Read all about it and sign up to join the count.

Joining the count will contribute actual evidence - increasing pressure on Governments and Companies to curb plastic pollution.



Calculate your Carbon Footprint

Calculate your own carbon footprint by clicking this link: <https://carbon-calculator.climatehero.org/>

It's quite good fun and you might be pleasantly surprised or spurred to take action.

You'll find out all the things you're doing right and discover things you could do better.



Food Packaging

It is estimated that 40% of Europe's food is packed in plastic, mostly designed for single use and not recyclable. (*ING Economics Dept 2019*)



Think how many layers of packaging might have been used. Are 'products' individually wrapped, then sold as sets in a plastic tray, bag or outer wrapper made of plastic or cardboard? Sets were probably delivered by the manufacturer to the warehouse/store in cardboard cartons plastic-shrink-wrapped on to pallets. That means up to FOUR layers of packaging.

Food packaging can be of great benefit in terms of hygiene and increased shelf life, however...

- Fresh fruit and veg come in their own packaging – their skin! – and often do not need to be packed in nets or plastic trays. Take your own reusable bags if you need to.
- Try to buy your fruit and vegetables from shops that sell the produce loose, avoiding unwanted packaging and the risk of overbuying.
- Tell your supermarket that you don't need your oranges in a net or potatoes in a polythene bag.

When food must be wrapped for transportation, e.g. flour, sugar, porridge oats, breakfast cereal – choose cardboard or paper over plastic.

Some dry goods and liquids products can now be dispensed into reusable containers that you can take back to a shop and refill. <https://www.refillcoalition.com/>

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