

# **LONDON CLIMATE ACTION WEEK**

Celebrate the world's largest city-based climate change festival with these key events

# OMMM...

The organisation using multimedia content to foster human connection and create a positive global impact

# **PUTTING NATURE IN BOARDROOMS**

**Model twins Brett and** Scott Staniland on **Environment Day fashion** 

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# Welcome to My Green Pod Magazine!



Katie Hill, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF katie@mygreenpod.com

World Environment Day (05 June), led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), is celebrated by millions of people around the world. This year it's asking us to 'make peace with the land' by helping to restore forests, water sources and soils.

UNEP has warned that the equivalent of one football pitch of soil is eroded every five seconds, yet it takes 1,000 years to generate 3cm of topsoil.

Without action, exposure to air pollution beyond safe guidelines will increase by 50% within the decade and plastic waste flowing into our water systems will nearly triple by 2040.

If we protect our environment it will protect us; trees in urban areas can cool the air by up to 5°C, reducing air conditioning needs by 25%.

Lakes, rivers and wetlands hold 20-30% of global carbon, despite occupying only 5-8% of its land surface.

In this issue we look at some of the many ways you can do your bit to protect the environment and be part of what UNEP's calling 'generation restoration'.

We speak to pioneers who are shaking up business models, leadership ideas, farming practices and everyday product formulations to put people and planet at the heart of what they do.

We hope you enjoy getting to know them and that you're inspired to make a positive change – big or small – that will last beyond World Environment Day 2024.



# **ABOUT US**

My Green Pod is an independent, family-run UK business, founded by Katie Hill and Jarvis Smith. We want to share the real stories behind the brands and people working tirelessly to offer ethical alternatives to mainstream products and services. You might not see these options on the high street and they may not be the first to appear in online searches. But they are on mygreenpod.com.

Use the search bar to find conscious lifestyle inspiration - and you could save some cash along the way!



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Around 40% of our energy currently comes from renewable sources





3.6 billion
people live in
areas highly
susceptible to
the impacts of
climate change



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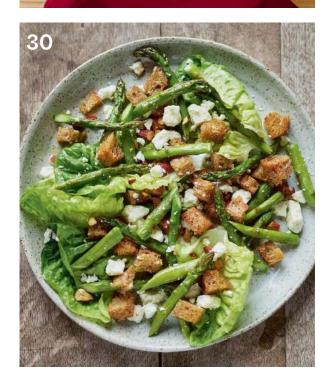
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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Katie Hill DESIGN: Suzanne Taylor PUBLISHER: Jarvis Smith PUBLISHING: My Green Pod



On 22 April, EARTHDAY. ORG projected messages on the Supreme Court, Ottawa ahead of INC-4 negotiations for the Global Plastics Treaty

Lee Franklin, college campus coordinator at EARTHDAY.ORG, explains why youth-led movements are inspiring hope for the future

oung people and college students have always stood at the forefront of change – and especially when it comes to the environmental movement.

Whether it's because of their sense of empathy, their inherent optimism or, more recently, the existential threat of climate change faced in real time, you can always count on youth to step up and fight for our planet. As we mark World Environment Day (05 June), we have never needed them more.

While the very first Earth Day was inspired by veteran environmentalists like Rachel Carson and conceived by Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson, it was planned and executed by young people.

Student anti-war activist Denis Hayes organised the very first Earth Day and worked with young people and student organisers to mobilise 20 million Americans to protest on the first Earth Day in 1970. He went on to co-found EARTHDAY.ORG.

# **EMPOWERING ACTION**

Today we continue to see bold leadership from youth from across the world – most famously Greta Thunberg, who started Fridays for Future. Sunrise Movement and the Campus Climate Network are just two of the many other organisations started by young people to harness the power of youth and students to advance the environmental movement.

EARTHDAY.ORG, for its part, revived its college campus outreach programme this year with the Earth Day Campus Coalition (EDCC). Like other youth-focused environmental organisations, the EDCC has stepped into the arena to unify and empower college students to act – but of course, we aim to make Earth Day the focal point of our efforts.

# **REAL-WORLD IMPACT**

In a media market that defines success and profits using 'views' and 'clicks', young people are inundated with messages about which issues they should care about. These messages come from the media, political campaigns, charities, advocacy groups, corporations and even governments. It is easy to be overwhelmed and dismiss everything; if every issue is the most pressing issue of our time, then how can we tell what matters?

The reality is that we do face a wide range of challenges. The EDCC is not here to tell students and young people what issues they need to prioritise over others; we are here to provide information and the help they need to take substantive action.

Everyone knows the situation we face is dire, and young people are anxious for the future. College students don't need another flashy environmental campaign to get their attention; they are looking for tangible and credible actions that drive actual impact.

Student protests calling for university divestment from fossil fuels are a perfect example of this.

Students who care about the climate crisis already know they cannot change the policies of multinational corporations, and governments are hard to persuade as well. But they have a real shot at calling for their universities, who they help fund, to divest from fossil fuels. Some US colleges have already, either wholly or partially, divested.

# **MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES**

Earlier this year, the Campus Coalition used this knowledge to inform our strategy of working with college students across the US to organise demonstrations, rallies, cleanups and signaturedrives. These events were aimed at pressuring the US government to advocate for limits on plastic production in negotiations for the United Nations Global Plastic Treaty.

These actions came to a head on 22 April – Earth Day – the day before the fourth convening of the negotiations, INC-4, in Ottawa, Canada. Along the way, we urged state governments to repeal laws making it illegal for municipalities to regulate single-use plastics and we worked with municipal governments to join us in our call for a strong treaty aimed at reducing the use of plastic in their own operations and departments.

The EDCC brings an approach to student organising that is not driven by the need for 'clicks' or 'views'. We work alongside students to try and work out how best to leverage the power of Earth Day and then provide truly meaningful opportunities for action – plus funded logistical support to make sure these actions happen.

# **JOIN THE MOVEMENT**

With the 55th anniversary of Earth Day now just a year away, we are at a critical tipping point in both our efforts in dealing with it and its escalating impact. We invite all college students to sign up, get involved and join us in making the next Earth Day as impactful as possible.

We need your help to mobilise; we need your help to decide what our next steps will be and we need you to make your voice heard. This movement belongs to students, college campuses and young people. It would be a true privilege to work alongside you over the next year and beyond – please join the movement.

# Find out more

■ Discover ways to join the movement and support meaningful action for the Earth at earthday.org

rom 06-09 November 2024, the global
Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL)
community will return to celebrate Global
Donut Days – a multi-day, community-led festival
centred on Doughnut Economics.

Previously titled Global Donut Day, the festival was pluralised because the celebration couldn't be contained in a single day. The event will still be held online and in person around the world.

### **ENABLING GLOBAL CONNECTION**

Last year, Global Donut Day saw participation in 26 countries and 56 places, engaging more than 4,000 people in over a hundred events on one day. The day connected people and strengthened existing relationships across the global community and among Doughnut Economics practitioners.

The platform gave the global community of local groups – all working to support people and planet – a sense of being part of something bigger, and the collective impact was significant.

From sessions covering Doughnut Economics basics to topics including community care and accessibility in cities such as Melbourne, Hamburg and Beijing, Global Donut Day brought together an enthusiastic collective to inspire a practical and actionable future in which we all thrive within the doughnut's social and planetary boundaries.

Catriona Rawsthorne, Doughnut Economics researcher for CIVIC SQUARE in Birmingham, said it was 'really powerful' to be able to 'connect with people globally around our work and around a much bigger story of economic transformation.'

# **CATALYSING LOCAL ACTION**

Global Donut Day gave those who have been meaning to act a reason to start local action. Through its energy, global attention and support, it created a forum and platform that enabled local organisers to reach new audiences, create new connections and build community locally.

'Global Donut Day was great', said Eva Valencia-Lenero, from the Mexico City-based Tricolour Coalition group. 'We loved it, as it helped us a lot. We will now make a project on rainwater harvesting [...] that resulted from a workshop we organised [during] Global Donut Day. So it was very useful!'

CLOCKWISE Regen Sydney's goal is to get Sydney inside the Doughnut within a generation; The Amsterdam Doughnut Coalition wants to make Amsterdam a doughnut-city; on the beach with Regen Sydney; Donut Brasil links Doughnut Economics to the SDGs



# GLOBAL DONUT DAYS 2024







# FROM DAY TO DAYS

This year, Global Donut Days will be a multi-day event to allow more flexibility and opportunity for organising local events. Global Donut Days will start with a day of online events on 06 November, followed by three days of events from 07-09 November, organised by members of the DEAL Community worldwide and centred on the ideas of Doughnut Economics.

Alexandra Anghel – from the group Cluj Sustainable, based in Cluj-Napoca, Romania – shared that '[a]s a team, we've been wanting to bring the Doughnut to the city for years and Global Donut Day was just the push we needed.'

Like last year, any local group, network or organisation following the DEAL Principles and Guidelines can organise Global Donut Days events. This year, local governments working with Doughnut Economics have also been welcomed to organise events.

# **DOUGHNUT ECONOMICS AND DEAL**

The Doughnut provides a blueprint for how humanity could thrive in the 21st century between social and ecological limits.

Kate Raworth's 2017 book, Doughnut Economics: seven ways to think like a 21st century economist, explored the economic thinking needed to bring humanity into the Doughnut, drawing together insights from diverse economic perspectives in an engaging and accessible way that everyone can understand.

DEAL is an organisation co-founded as a not-for-profit in July 2019 by Kate Raworth and Carlota Sanz. It exists to support changemakers worldwide — in communities, education, cities and regions, business, government and more — who are turning the ideas of Doughnut Economics into transformative action and aiming to bring about systemic change. The community now consists of over 15,000 people.

# **Find out more**

For further details, announcements and to sign your community up for Global Donut Days, visit doughnuteconomics.org

# COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

This organisation is using multimedia content to foster human connection and create a positive global impact

oday's world is marked by heightened levels of stress; rapid advancements in technology, including social media and AI, have revolutionised communication but also contribute to a pervasive sense of loneliness and alienation.

In many cases the fabric of society and family, once strong and supportive, has weakened, exacerbating feelings of isolation and disconnection. These factors combine to create a landscape in which community bonds are frayed, and individuals can struggle to find a sense of belonging and purpose.

Multimedia company OMMM, the new headline sponsor of the P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards, is very aware that today's challenges can deeply affect our collective wellbeing – but the organisation, founded by women, mothers and minorities, also sees a rise in human consciousness and an opportunity to make a positive impact on society.

'By bridging ancient wisdom with the modern world through various media platforms, we provide universal access to practical tools to raise consciousness', explains OMMM co-founder Maria Alphonse. 'We empower individuals to unlock their full potential, nurture their inner peace and actively contribute to a more peaceful and connected global community.'

# **TECH FOR THE SOUL**

OMMM curates and delivers accessible multimedia content, live events, transformation programmes and immersive experiences that integrate ancient knowledge and healing practices into daily life, working with 'OMMMbassadors' around the world who support the expansion of their work.

In a sense OMMM serves as the connective tissue that activates and amplifies the greatest work of highly qualified talent, spreading it among people from all walks of life.

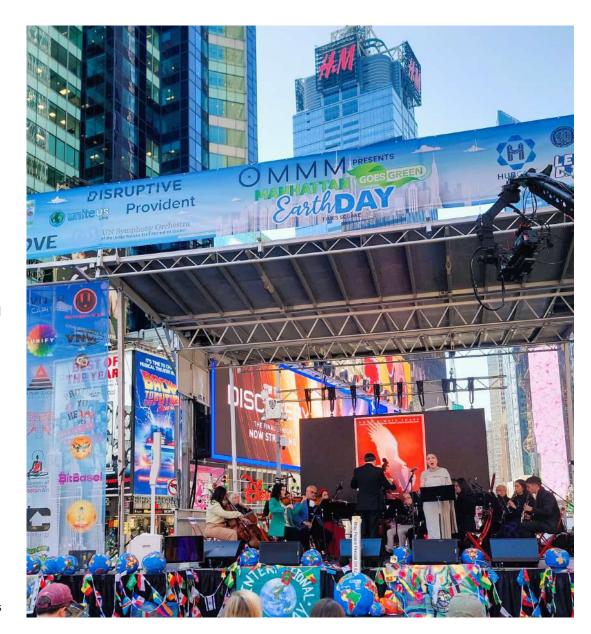
'We combine ancient wisdom with cutting-edge tech to create profound experiences', says Maria. 'Our content offers a holistic perspective on wellness that emphasises the interconnectedness of mind, body and spirit as well as the interconnectedness of all beings and the universal nature of human experiences, fostering a sense of unity and empathy among our audience to inspire personal transformation and collective growth.'

# **OPEN-ACCESS WELLBEING TOOLS**

OMMM's content is for anyone who is even a little bit curious about human nature – whether the goal is spiritual growth, acquiring practical tools, achieving personal development or just discovering new information.

From the start it was crucial to OMMM's founders that tools to calm the mind should be available to everyone; 'Universal access is crucial because everyone deserves the opportunity to cultivate inner peace and emotional wellbeing, regardless of their background or circumstances', explains co-founder Michelle Narciso. 'Historically, access to such tools has been limited; our aim with OMMM is to bridge this gap.'

OMMM is currently developing transformative programmes that will soon be introduced to the business world, and is





helping to expand conscious programmes in schools that merge art, ancient wisdom and technology, which OMMM believes have the power to transform the future of education.

Business leaders and organisations are a key audience for OMMM; the goal is to integrate practical tools from ancient and sacred teachings and wisdom into work culture to enhance well-being, creativity and productivity, ultimately leading to a positive impact on the broader community. 'Individuals looking to reconnect with themselves, cultivate inner peace and explore ancient wisdom in a modern context could also benefit from OMMM's content', says Michelle.

# **ANCIENT SKILLS FOR MODERN LIFE**

For OMMM's founders, ancient practices hold timeless wisdom that remains relevant today. By integrating these practices into modern approaches to wellness, the goal is to provide holistic solutions that address the complexities of our contemporary lives in very simple and profound ways.





# 'Universal access is crucial because everyone deserves the opportunity to cultivate inner peace and emotional wellbeing, regardless of their background or circumstances'

'Current approaches to wellness often focus on the physical aspect, neglecting the interconnectedness of mind, body and spirit and our ancient traditions', explains Maria. 'By incorporating ancient practices and holistic perspectives, we can achieve a more comprehensive approach to wellbeing.'

In addition to helping individuals thrive under the pressures and pace of modern life, OMMM's approach to wellbeing is also attuned to the challenges we face at a global level.

'We believe our world is evolving to integrate consciousness and sustainability as two faces of the same coin', Michelle shares. 'Inner peace and emotional balance can foster a deeper connection to oneself and the world around us. This heightened awareness can lead to more sustainable choices and actions in how we interact with our environment and others. And once you connect with nature and the deepest forces behind sustainability, you can ultimately connect with yourself and the unity of our consciousness.'

# **CREATING A COLLECTIVE IMPACT**

While meditation might seem to many to be a highly private way to promote individual wellbeing, for OMMM it's important to recognise the ripple effect and its power to create a collective consciousness of compassion, empathy and unity. 'This shift in mindset can lead to positive changes in how we interact with one another and the world', says Maria.

OMMM launched one year ago at Carnegie Hall in New York, with a sold-out spiritual concert featuring renowned artists and

CLOCKWISE His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave his blessings to both Lama Tashi's Museum of Contemporary Tibetan Art and OMMM in Dharamsala; spiritual virtuosos gathered to help launch OMMM with a spiritual concert at Carnegie Hall; OMMM presents Earth Day in Times Square, pictured with the UN Symphony Orchestra: OMMM cofounders Michelle (left). Michel (centre) and Maria (centre-right) with author Marianne Williamson (centre-left) during UN International Day of Peace at Times Square, co-produced by OMMM

speakers led by OMMM co-founder Michel Pascal. The organisation went on to co-produce two large events at New York's Times Square, for the UN International Day of Peace and Earth Day. It presented the trailer for its immersive meditation film during COP28 week in Dubai, co-produced a musical about Yogananda at the Biltmore Hotel in LA and shared the stage with Marianne Williamson at The Saban Theater.

'Our most recent events, centred around Earth Day, concluded at the prestigious Neue House with panels and presentations that inspired people globally', Michelle told us. OMMM also had the honour of visiting His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama, led by one of its OMMMbassadors, and received his blessing last year.

# A NETWORK OF OMMMBASSADORS

In a fast-paced world filled with distractions, OMMM's aim is to be a beacon of light, offering a sanctuary for individuals to reconnect with themselves, tap in to their inner wisdom and cultivate a sense of peace and harmony in their lives and the world around them.

'We are very aware that we cannot do it alone – nor do we have all the answers – yet we trust we are on the right path. We could not do it without our OMMMbassadors, and are honoured to have them as part of OMMM', Maria shares. 'These individuals, genuinely committed to our mission, have been carefully curated to expand their wisdom and good work through our platforms. We hope you enjoy getting to know some of the OMMMbassadors who will be attending the PEAs.'







Introducing the artist fusing tradition and modernity in Tibetan art, culture and religion

ama Tashi Norbu, a visual artist and OMMMbassador, is the president and founder of the Museum of Contemporary Tibetan Art.

Born into the rich tradition of Tibetan thangka painting, Tashi Norbu received his education and training at the court of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His journey from a traditional Tibetan thangka painter to a contemporary artist is testament to his ability to blend ancient wisdom with modern artistic expression.

# THE THANGKA TRADITION

Tibetan thangka paintings, which emerged in the 11th century, aren't just work of art; they are tools for meditation and vehicles for teaching Buddhist philosophy. These intricate paintings depict the life and enlightenment of Buddha, and served as visual aids for travelling lamas who used them to communicate their teachings in villages.

Thangkas were traditionally created anonymously and according to strict rules, ensuring the narrative – rather than the artist's personal expression – remained the focal point. The paintings, which often required months or even years to complete, were crafted with the intention of guiding the viewer's meditation and spiritual journey, so the integrity of the representation was paramount.

# A MODERN THANGKA PAINTER

Tashi Norbu's journey as an artist began within this traditional framework, but his path took a turn when he was sent to the West to study contemporary art. This experience allowed him to blend traditional Tibetan iconography with modern elements,

creating a unique style that is both reflective of his heritage and relevant to contemporary audiences.

While working under His Holiness the Dalai Lama, it became clear just how talented Tashi Norbu was. His studies were sponsored in the West and Tashi Norbu went on to obtain a degree in Contemporary Art in Belgium, which gave him the understanding required to innovate within his cultural heritage.

Tashi Norbu's contemporary paintings and collages retain the essence of thangka art, telling stories of Buddha and Buddhist philosophy while incorporating symbols of modern life. His works often feature traditional Buddhist icons alongside contemporary objects such as mobile phones, laptops and aeroplanes. These elements, combined with images from his adopted home in the Netherlands, create a playful and dynamic visual narrative.

# TRADITION AND MODERNITY

In 2014, Tashi Norbu's art began integrating Western science with traditional Buddhist beliefs. The goal was to visually demonstrate that there is no fundamental difference between various beliefs or thoughts, and encourage a dialogue where everyone can learn from each other, fostering a collective growth in knowledge and humanity.

This innovative approach is evident in Tashi Norbu's live painting performances, where he combines traditional techniques with modern artistic practices. Audiences worldwide have been captivated by his ability to provide a new lens through which to view both Buddhist philosophy and contemporary issues.

### A MONK AND AN ARTIST

Tashi Norbu's life as a Tibetan Buddhist monk deeply influences his art. Ordained by Namkhai Nyingpo Rinpoche, who is considered part of the legendary Sky Dancers of Tibet, Tashi Norbu embodies a spiritual depth that permeates his work. Beyond his paintings, Tashi Norbu engages in various forms of artistic expression, including meditation, sand mandala creations and even tattooing sacred Tibetan art based on individuals' astrological charts. His commitment to alleviating the suffering of all sentient beings is evident in his advocacy for the preservation of Tibetan art and culture.

Through his multi-faceted approach, Tashi Norbu demonstrates that art is not just a visual experience but a holistic one that engages the mind, body and spirit.

# THE SACRED ART OF TATTOOS

Among his many unique talents, Tashi Norbu is also the only Tibetan Lama who creates sacred tattoos based on an individual's personal astrology and mantra. This practice is a profound extension of his artistic and spiritual work, merging traditional Tibetan astrology with the contemporary art of tattooing. Each tattoo is a personalised spiritual tool designed to align with the individual's astrological chart and mantras, which are believed to carry specific energies and blessings.

These sacred tattoos are more than just body art; they are spiritual symbols meant to protect, empower and guide the wearer. Tashi Norbu carefully designs each tattoo to reflect the unique spiritual journey of the individual, combining ancient wisdom with a deeply personal touch. This practice underscores his belief in the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of individual spiritual paths.

# THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY TIBETAN ART

As the founder and creative director of the Museum of Contemporary Tibetan Art in the Netherlands, Lama Tashi Norbu has created a unique space dedicated to Tibetan art. This museum, the only registered Tibetan museum in the world, serves as a cultural hub where traditional and contemporary Tibetan art coexist. Tashi's vision extends beyond this museum; he aims to establish a similar institution in the United States, furthering his mission to preserve and promote Tibetan culture.

The museum not only houses a vast collection of Tibetan art but also serves as an educational centre. It offers workshops, lectures and cultural events that aim to engage the public in the rich traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and art. Through these initiatives, Tashi Norbu hopes to inspire a new generation of artists and scholars to appreciate and continue the legacy of Tibetan art.

OPPOSITE
Lama Tashi
Norbu addresses
environmental issues
with his large Buddha
sculptures, created
from recycled materials
such as scrap wood,
metal and plastic

BELOW Tashi Norbu's art integrates Western science with traditional Buddhist beliefs

### **GLOBAL INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY**

Tashi Norbu's dedication to sustainability is reflected in his art and activism. His large Buddha sculptures, created from recycled materials such as scrap wood, metal and plastic, address pressing environmental issues. These sculptures symbolise the interconnectedness of all life and the impact of human actions on the planet. Tashi Norbu places these artworks in public spaces around the world to draw attention to critical issues like deforestation and ocean pollution.

Tashi Norbu is collaborating with Indigenous elders in Ecuador to build a 20-foot Buddha in the Amazon. The aim is to highlight ongoing deforestation and to promote sustainable practices to protect this vital ecosystem.

### THE STORYTELLERS IN ART

Tashi Norbu is one of the few remaining Lama Manis, or storytellers in art. Lama Manis travel to teach Tibetan Buddhist philosophies and preserve Tibetan culture through their storytelling and artistic expressions. This role further emphasises Tashi Norbu's commitment to his heritage and his mission to share it with the world.

As a Lama Mani, Tashi Norbu embodies the ancient tradition of oral storytelling, using his art to convey complex philosophical ideas and cultural narratives in a way that is accessible and engaging. His ability to connect with audiences on a personal level through his stories and art makes him a powerful advocate for Tibetan culture and Buddhism.

# **STUDYING WESTERN CULTURE**

Tashi Norbu has taken the time to study English and immerse himself in Western culture. This allows him to bridge the gap between East and West, making his teachings and art more accessible to a broader audience. His fluency in English and understanding of Western cultural nuances enable him to engage deeply with diverse communities, fostering a greater appreciation of Tibetan art and philosophy.

In a world where rapid change often leads to a disconnection from our roots, Tashi Norbu stands as a beacon of hope, reminding us of the enduring value of tradition while embracing the possibilities of the future. His work is a celebration of the rich tapestry of human experience, woven together by the threads of art, spirituality and compassion. Through his tireless efforts, Tashi Norbu continues to inspire and transform – one painting, one performance and one tattoo at a time.

# **Find out more**

Stay up to date with OMMM at ommmpresents.org, or email info@ommmpresents.org with any enquiries





# Climate change and peace

Madeleine Mosse, CEO at Plan for Peace, explores how peacebuilding tools help us tackle the most pressing issue of our times

limate change is no longer confined to academic discussions or high-level meetings. It has become a defining issue of our time, impacting every aspect of our lives – from food security to public health and even our economic stability.

Some 3.6 billion people live in areas highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Between 2030 and 2050, the WHO estimates 250,000 deaths per year will be due to climate change-related factors such as undernutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress.

# **CLIMATE AND CONFLICT**

From a peacebuilding standpoint, climate change has the potential to exacerbate existing challenges like food insecurity, water scarcity or resource management. This then increases the likelihood of violent conflicts.

In fact, climate change has already been a contributing factor to violent conflict in regions like Syria, where tensions escalated due to perceived government mishandling of a national drought, and in Sudan, where conflicts have partially centred on access to land, water and other essential resources.

So what can we, as peacebuilders, offer in this complex and nuanced landscape?

From our perspective, one thing is clear. Tackling climate change can only be effective if it involves all stakeholders – in other words, we need to find ways to work with every level of society, from individuals and communities to national and international policymakers.

For instance, the mine required to extract the minerals we need to power the green energy transition may create jobs. It may also destroy biodiversity-rich natural habitat and local people's livelihoods. How can these seemingly opposing sides meet? Peacebuilding gives us the tools to make this kind of wide-ranging negotiation and dialogue possible.

# THE POWER OF MEDIATION

The process of peacebuilding uses tried and tested principles such as open listening, empathy and non-violent problem-solving to make sure that everyone feels seen and heard. This foundation is what lays the ground for difficult conversations to be had.

Seasoned peace activist Scilla Elworthy, founder of Plan for Peace, attributes the success of a round of nuclear mediation talks she hosted to



the fact that she had installed expert meditators beneath the negotiation room as a means by which to help induce calm.

At Plan for Peace, we work with an approach called Infrastructures for Peace – an inclusive, informed and structured approach that can help build the necessary multi-level engagement that we need to tackle climate change.

# **PEACEBUILDING IN ACTION**

Climate change fuels conflict. As peacebuilders we are being called upon to employ our skills to both peacefully transform violence and to help prevent environmental catastrophe.

Peacebuilders have the skills to facilitate dialogue, negotiations and other inclusive processes that bring actors together from across governments,

civil society, businesses and academia to find sustainable solutions to tackling climate change and to reducing its impact on communities.

Peacebuilders can train and mobilise actors on the ground to step in and solve disputes that arise from issues such as resource scarcity and mass migration, and can help find collaborative and conflict-sensitive approaches to preventing further environmental degradation.

At the same time, peacebuilders can work with communities to devise and advocate for effective policy solutions that address the root causes of climate change and conflict.

To tackle climate change, we have to work together. Peacebuilding can equip us with the tools we need to facilitate the kind of cooperation that can help turn this tide around.

# **Find out more**

■ Information about Plan for Peace and Crossing the Divide is at planforpeace.org

eadership is about to get even more uncomfortable: today's leaders face a fast-changing world where decisions are made with limited information, especially about the future.

'Over 4.9 million research articles published on Google Scholar contain the keyword 'sustainability',' says Dr Tina Karme; 'there is no chance anyone can digest that amount of information.'

For Tina the myth of the leader at the top of an organisation having all the answers, insight and knowledge is broken – and that is not all. Tina believes the whole concept of 'leaders and followers' is being challenged by a shift towards influencing and a reframing of leadership as a process.

# **HUMAN LEADERSHIP**

The amount of information available is increasing all the time, and we have a limited ability to process it. 'Al will beat us in being able to digest and sort through the 4.9 million academic articles on sustainability', Tina says. 'Naturally, a leader could and should use Al to digest the overflow of information and knowledge, but if you think leadership is about digesting the most books, articles and other forms of information, then I think you are radically off track. If you act and think like a machine, machines will replace you.'

Al presents a very real challenge to the belief that those who hold knowledge hold power. We're left to wonder what being human – and an effective human leader – actually means.

'Research has been conducted to discover which leaders people look up to', Tina shares. 'In this list, we frequently hear names like Gandhi and Mandela, and many of the traits that inspire respect are very human at their core. What puzzles me is that despite this, leaders continue to overemphasise the role of power. Now that knowledge is freely available, leadership needs to return to its core – it should be about not knowing but finding the ways to discover the solutions, about understanding and caring, about being human – with all the beauty that comes with it. This is how leaders will succeed in navigating complexity.'

# **LEARNING TO LET GO**

Older, linear forms of leadership are limited in their ability to deal with the complex issues we face today. The overuse of natural resources, business impacts on global warming and human rights issues are just some of the areas that often require rapid decision-making on the basis of multiple unknowns. Patterns must be allowed to unfold from a holistic approach with input from many stakeholders.

For Tina this shift in leadership style, and the movement away from leaders being 'the ones with all the answers and knowledge', will also require 'a lot of unlearning'. 'We can only develop if we can unlearn habits and models – and even let go



# KNOWLEDGE ISN'T POVER

**Dr Tina Karme** explores the complexity of modern leadership, and how different styles can enable or disable progress

of knowledge that no longer serves us', she shares. 'Leaders need to allow themselves intelligent failure; that is when you learn along the way. All failure is not good, but failure that aims to discover new solutions and pathways is good, and we need more of that.'

Tina believes we must approach complex situations with a sense of curiosity and a willingness to learn along the way. 'There are multiple unknowns, and successful leaders must learn to deal with them as they go along. We need to lead with good-quality questions where solutions can be discovered. This is very different from how many view leadership today.'

# **ALTERNATIVE LEADERSHIP**

For Tina, leaders, researchers, governments and businesses must rethink their approaches and be involved in narratives and discourses that are in the making. 'If you do it through complex, fact-based reports rather than engaging with your audience in a way that supports their sensemaking

process, you will lose the audience, and they will fill in the blanks with any information available that they can make sense of', Tina warns.

The rise of disinformation and echo chambers make it more vital than ever for leaders to be actively involved in the sensemaking process of societies, individuals and groups. For Tina this requires strength, wisdom, humbleness and letting go of ego, hierarchy and the 'know-it-all' attitude.

'Leaders, especially in business, have, through globalisation, become separate from environment and society', Tina explains. 'In the Nordics, many leaders are still highly integrated into society and the environment. The CEO's child might be best friends at school with a root-level employee's child. I think this is a good thing, as we also have more acceptance for leaders making mistakes as part of a learning and development journey.'

While Tina acknowledges the Nordic Leadership style is no silver bullet, it is certainly a starting point to inspire alternative leadership approaches. 'This is just one alternative take on leadership', Tina says. 'However, I am convinced of the importance of recognising and appreciating ego but not allowing it in the driver's seat. Bringing humanity back into leadership will take us a long way, and if we can be compassionate and wise rather than simply knowledgeable, I think a very different form of leadership will emerge.'

# **ABOUT TINA KARME**

Tina Karme is a Doctor of Business Administration with a Master of Science (M.Sc) degree from Finland in Business Management and a M.Sc from the UN Institute of Training and Research collaboration programme with Franklin University Switzerland on International Management and Sustainability.

# INSIDE GREN GREN HONES

What's it really like to get green tech installed in your home - and is it worth the cash?

s well as supplying homes and businesses with renewable energy sourced from around the UK, Good Energy is helping homeowners take the next step towards a greener home by providing and installing everything from electric vehicle chargers to solar panels and heat pumps. We spoke to two Good Energy customers about the greener choices they have made for

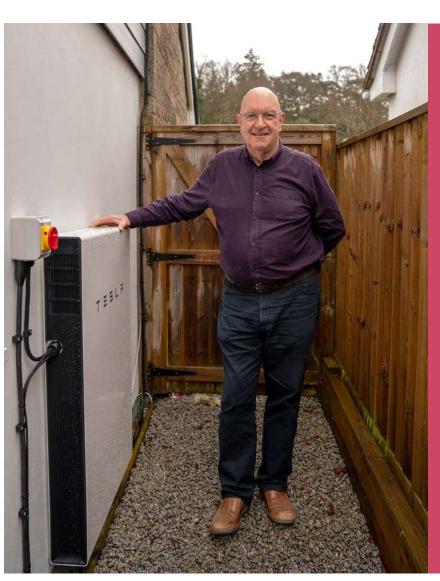
their homes, why they made them, what the installation process was like and – perhaps most importantly – whether they have made a positive impact on their energy bills.

### **Find out more**

Read solar panel and heat pump reviews, plus information about green tech for reducing your bills, at goodenergy.co.uk

# **READER OFFER**

My Green Pod readers can get £400 off a heat pump or solar installation from Good Energy.
Use the discount code MYGP2024 when you visit goodenergy.co.uk to get a quote.



# **SOLAR STEVE AND GWEN**

Steve and Gwen were already Good Energy customers when they chose the company to install solar panels and a Tesla Powerwall 2 battery in January.

'We wanted to get solar panels for three main reasons', Steve shares. 'First of all it's about being more eco friendly; we've been with Good Energy on and off for 20 years and we care about the planet. Following the energy crisis we



also wanted to get some stability on our energy prices – and a degree of self-sufficiency. Our Tesla Powerwall 2 battery will power our home during a power cut, and a full battery could last us for several days.'

Trust and quality were two key reasons why Steve and Gwen chose Good Energy over other solar installers. 'Having the backing of Good Energy gave us confidence that we were choosing a quality installer', Steve explains. 'I enjoy working with just one company, and I like that they manage our export tariff, too.'

Steve and Gwen have had 5kW of Sunpower solar panels plus a 13.5kWh Tesla Powerwall 2 installed at their home. These are premium products with great warranties, providing peace of mind they'll work for the long term.

'The Good Energy Solar installation was very good', Steve remembers.
'Health and safety is very important to me and I could see the team working together safely and following the correct guidelines. The finished

# **HEAT PUMP DI**

Di, a journalist who lives in Wiltshire with her eldest daughter, chose Good Energy to install her air source heat pump in 2021. Di is keen to protect the planet and, like many people who care about the climate, wanted to make a greener choice for her energy.

'I'm motivated by making ethical and environmentally friendly decisions', Di tells us. 'My gas boiler was getting old and I wanted to replace it with a greener option; that is what led me to choose an air source heat pump. It's sustainable and efficient, and I particularly like that when the sun is shining, it is powered by my solar panels.'

'It is very easy to feel hopeless in the face of the climate crisis', Di continues, 'but the antidote to feeling hopeless is to do something – to be active. Whether that means installing an air source heat pump or even putting out water for the birds on a hot day, just do something and you will feel better for it.'

Di's experience getting her installation with Good Energy was straightforward, and she found the company 'great to work with'.



'From the survey through to design and installation, the team was lovely and always took my wishes into account', Di says. 'I prefer my home to be on the cooler side, and I let the team know this when they were designing the heating system. Now I can heat my home exactly how I like it – a constant ambient temperature of around 16 degrees. It's really easy to manage using an app on my phone and it works brilliantly for my needs.'

Di was initially worried that a heat pump would be noisy – but has



discovered it isn't at all. 'I don't think my neighbours even know it is there', she tells us

After two incredibly expensive winters, Di's solar panels and heat pump have kept her bills significantly lower than those of many, which has been a huge relief in a time of so much uncertainty. 'Not only have I looked after the environment and saved myself money', Di says; 'I have future-proofed my home as well.'

CLOCKWISE Di's air source heat pump has helped reduce bills and future-proof her home; on sunny days Di's heat pump is powered by her soar panels; Steve's car is mainly charged at home, and his solar and battery help keep costs down; energy use is easy to view and control on the Good Energy app; Steve with his Tesla Powerwall 2 battery

product not only looks fantastic but also works exactly as designed.'

It's no secret that the sun doesn't always shine in the UK, so you'd be forgiven for thinking it isn't great for solar. Steve soon discovered that isn't true. 'I used to think that conditions needed to be optimal for solar panels to work properly in the UK', he shares. 'But going through the process I found solar panels would work well on our east-facing roof, and don't even need direct sunlight to generate energy.'

Steve and Gwen's installation took place in the winter, and from the very first month their solar panels and battery have provided most of their domestic energy. They recently bought a plug-in hybrid car which will mainly be charged at home, making Steve and Gwen higher electricity users. 'Looking at the projected figures from Good Energy Solar, we expect to recoup our upfront costs by about 8-9% every year', Steve shares, 'which is better than we can get from putting the money in the bank.'



'Health and safety is very important to me and I could see the team working together safely and following the correct guidelines. The finished product not only looks fantastic but also works exactly as designed.'

# **STEVE**

GOOD ENERGY CUSTOMER



Bristol Energy Cooperative gives energy profits back to its community – CEO **Helen Martin** introduces its latest share offer

nergy bills have soared in recent years, leaving many appalled by the record-breaking profits reported by big energy providers.

Skyrocketing energy prices also pose a threat to essential community spaces; many are struggling to keep the bills paid and their users warm.

At the same time our government is not doing enough to reduce our national carbon output or invest in renewable energy; currently only about 40% of our energy comes from renewable sources. As it stands right now, as a country we are not acting quickly enough to meet the goals of the Paris climate agreement. It's time to rethink how we fulfil our community energy needs, and community energy is a solution – right on our doorsteps – that could help us to reach net zero.

# **SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SPACES**

At Bristol Energy Cooperative (BEC) we have made it our mission to build renewable energy projects and keep the profits within the communities that use them. With our members, we are working to reduce fossil fuel use, increase renewables and support essential community spaces and projects.

Bristol Energy Cooperative is a non-profit enterprise that develops renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects with and for the community. Established in 2011, we are owned by members of the community in and around Bristol, and individuals further afield who share our values.



# **SUN SHINES ON BRISTOL BEACON**

BEC's latest solar rooftop installation on the iconic Bristol Beacon is the kind of positive story we need right now. Our 348 solar panels will reduce Bristol Beacon's annual energy bills by around £2,400 in the first year, save the venue nearly 23 tonnes of CO2 annually and boost our community benefit contributions

by an estimated £12,400 over the project's lifetime – supporting the grassroots work that holds our city together. The project won Community Energy Initiative at Regen's Green Energy Awards last year. It's all part of our mission to build a power station on Bristol's roofs.

Don't invest unless you're prepared to lose all the money you invest. This is a high-risk investment and you are unlikely to be protected if something goes wrong.

Easton Community Centre's solar roof helps keep bills down; Bristol Energy Cooperative directs profits back into the community

Over the last 13 years, the co-operative has grown to over 1,600 investor members. With their help, BEC has brought 20 solar and battery projects online, generating enough clean, home-grown electricity to power over 3,500 homes annually.

### **RENEWABLES IN COMMUNITIES**

BEC projects are funded by investor members, who receive interest on their investment from the money the co-op receives for the energy we produce. However, it's important to mention that returns on investment are not guaranteed.

The installation and operation of solar panels save the community spaces we work with thousands of pounds a year. With these savings, essential community spaces are given a chance to survive and thrive in these tough economic times.

Our members' investments have enabled BEC to build a growing portfolio of clean energy projects – most recently rooftop solar installations on the newly refurbished Bristol Beacon music venue and the Bottle Yard Studios film and TV studio facility.

Unlike the big energy corporates, we retain benefits within the community to create positive change. Since we started, we have generated over £400,000 for community groups and projects working on issues like tackling fuel poverty, improving energy efficiency, cutting carbon emissions and raising awareness of positive climate action. We have generated £400,000 in direct community benefits funds and also given over £4,000 in international charity donations.

We have now launched a share offer on the Triodos Bank UK crowdfunding platform, hoping to tap into the growing interest from everyday investors to support green energy generation, local communities and energy independence.

Triodos Bank has been a proud supporter of community energy for many years.

# WHAT CROWDFUNDING WILL ACHIEVE

Through this community share offer, BEC aims to raise £1 million. Investors will become voting members of one of the country's largest, longest-running and most innovative energy co-ops.

We will use these funds to advance our mission of building a power station on the rooftops of Bristol by adding at least one megawatt of rooftop solar capacity, and to keep developing innovative local clean energy projects.

# Find out more

Information about this share offer and the predicted impact is at triodoscrowdfunding.co.uk



# London Climate Action Week EVENTS Add these key LCAW 2024 listings to your diary

More than 300 events are expected to take place during London Climate Week (LCAW) 2024 (22-30 June). Here are some of the key listings and what to expect if you attend.

# 24 JUNE: De-risking the Transition, Howdens

Launch of a major new international initiative of de-risking energy transitions and tackling climate impacts by the London insurance industry. A series of discussions and workshops at the Lloyds building around the insurance industry, climate risk and climate finance.

# 24 JUNE: Powering Past Coal Alliance High-Level Dialogue

High-level ministerial dialogue discussing how to accelerate the phaseout of coal in line with the Paris goals while ensuring a just and inclusive transition for workers and communities.

# 24 JUNE (Evening): Groundswell/Mission 1.5

Launch of new business and multi-stakeholder campaign putting forward a positive vision for the net zero transition and the broad benefits it will bring to everyone globally.

# 25 JUNE: P.E.A.Awards (see back cover)

# 25 JUNE: State of Climate Politics Forum

The State of Climate
Conference is a new high-level
international event examining
how climate change is
shaping and impacted by
broader international and
national politics. The inaugural
State of Climate Politics Forum
will be hosted by E3G and
feature prominent politicians,
policymakers, climate leaders
and E3G experts. This

invitation-only, on-therecord event, hosted at Mansion House, is a flagship LCAW event.

# 25-26 JUNE: Blue Earth Forum (see p19)

# 25-26 JUNE: Reset Connect, ExCeL Centre

Now in its third year, Reset Connect is a green investment event that provides present and future net zero business solutions and the financing to implement them. Over 7,000 attendees including sustainability professionals, large corporates, government leaders, policymakers, tech providers, innovators, purpose-led brands and entrepreneurs - network, find sustainable, low-carbon solutions and explore opportunities for funding through institutional and impact investors, private equity, venture capital and financial advisers.

# 25-26 JUNE: Future Fabrics Expo

A pioneer since 2011, the annual Future Fabrics Expo (FFE) showcases the material solutions that put the preservation and regeneration of nature, climate and biodiversity centre stage. Over the last 13 years, FFE has grown to become the largest dedicated sustainable sourcing showcase of innovative and sustainable material solutions for the fashion and interiors industry, with thousands of materials exhibited to professionals around the world every year.

# 6 JUNE: Climate Diplomacy Forum (Grantham)

Organised by the Grantham Institute and the European Union delegation to the UK, this is an invitation-only meeting to discuss the diplomatic challenge and milestones over the coming 18 months to COP30.

# 26 JUNE: Climate Investment Summit at the London Stock Exchange

A unique and leading global forum for investments in global climate solutions. Returning for a fifth year, the Summit will put a key focus on how to catalyse financial commitments into green investments for a green transition by 2030, including in emerging markets and developing economies. The Summit is hosted by the Climate Investment Coalition, an international public-private initiative established by the Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy & Utilities, Insurance & Pension Denmark, the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC) and World Climate Foundation to support driving a fullsystems transformation in climate finance deployment by mobilising financial commitments for clean energy and climate investments by 2030.

# 26-27 JUNE: Extreme Hangout, Ladbroke Hall

Get ready to dive into two days filled with exciting activities, workshops and discussions all centred around taking action for our planet. Connect with like-minded





individuals and learn how you can make a difference in the fight against climate change.

# 26-27 JUNE: Cities Climate Action Summit

SmartCitiesWorld presents the next instalment of the Cities Climate Action Summit, the must-attend gathering for forward-thinking city leaders, innovative policymakers, green finance experts and technology pioneers. This event is helping to drive change on the frontline in cities as they battle against the effects of climate change.

# 27 JUNE: Ashden Awards

The Ashden Awards are all about impact and supporting climate innovators to build a fair and sustainable future. Its winners bring clean

energy to refugee camps, make UK homes warm and energy efficient and protect our rivers and forests. This year's awards ceremony is part of London Climate Action Week. On the night you can watch moving films and hear how, together, we can take on the climate crisis. Then enjoy food, drink and networking with others passionate about the power of climate action.

# 27 JUNE: Climate Innovation Forum

The Climate Innovation Forum, set to return for the sixth year in 2024, will bring together over 1,000 senior public and private sector decision-makers to help turbocharge our transition to net zero. Organised by Climate Action, the Forum will be attended by policymakers, investors, climate-tech solution providers, business leaders and innovation catalysers to help achieve our net zero ambitions regionally, nationally and globally, while maximising the role of innovation in delivering net zero growth opportunities.

# **Find out more**

■ View all LCAW events at londonclimateactionweek.org



The world's largest city-based climate change festival prepares to return for a sixth year

ounded in 2019 by independent climate change think tank E3G and the Mayor of London, London Climate Action Week (22 June-30 June) is one of the world's largest independent climate change festivals of events.

It brings together local and global experts from across sectors to showcase London as a leading example of how the whole of society can come together to shape and drive climate action.

The week itself is made up of hundreds of independent events during which leaders, experts and community representatives tackle climate issues, share their knowledge and develop practical solutions both within their sectors and across the wider economy.

London Climate Action Week 2024 will unite leaders from across society to collaborate on four key themes: climate diplomacy and the road to climate ambition at COP30, finance, UK net zero transition and mobilising whole of society action.

# **LEADERSHIP FROM LONDON**

'London has an ambitious target of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, but the UK government's climate action plan is failing to support this, having been recently ruled as unlawful by the High Court for its lack of clarity', says Nick Mabey, founder and co-chief executive of E3G. 'London can play a crucial role in providing a clear vision, ambition and resources to accelerate climate action across the UK and beyond, drawing on its strengths in innovation, finance, education and the arts.'







### CLOCKWISE

Shirley Rodrigues, London Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, at LCAW 2023; Hackney School of Food at LCAW 2023; school children read poetry at LCAW 2023; Mayor of London Sadiq Khan and Nick Mabey, co-CEO and founder of LCAW

The sixth version of the annual festival will harness the capital's world-leading expertise to tackle challenges from climate risk and resilience in London to financing the climate transition at a global scale.

'This year's London Climate Action Week comes at a pivotal moment, with 2024 seeing elections in the UK and across the world where climate change is on the agenda', Nick added. 'This will set the political backdrop for countries to increase their climate ambition in 2025 and finally put the world on track to meet the goals agreed in Paris a decade ago. London Climate Action Week needs to be a starting gun for building the diplomatic pathway and financial support needed to make this happen.'

# **MORE THAN 300 EVENTS**

London Climate Action Week has evolved into the world's largest city-based climate change festival. In 2023 it attracted over 45,000 attendees through over 200 in-person and online events. This year more than 300 events are expected to be held by organisations including the P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards, Reset Connect and Blue Earth Forum.

# **Find out more**

■ View the London Climate Action Week events programme at londonclimateactionweek.org





he founders of Blue Earth Summit have launched a new competition – BE100 – to accelerate innovation in climate health. For the competition, 1,000 planet-positive startups and scale-ups are invited to pitch to hundreds of investors with access to £100 million in funds.

As Europe's biggest scale opportunity for green and environmental innovators, entry to BE100 is free and open to business of all sizes.

### **FINDING AND FUNDING BUSINESSES**

Blue Earth Summit organisers are expecting applications from startups and scale-ups in climate technology, clean energy, air and water – but want to hear from all emerging business solutions in planet health.

Designed to fast-forward innovative solutions, BE100 will form a central part of the Blue Earth Summit manifesto Inspire. Connect. Act.

'We all recognise that time is running out to protect our planet', says Guy Hayler, co-founder of Blue Earth Summit. 'BE100 is our own direct action to find and fund businesses that are driving systemic change within their respective industries. To date we have raised over £125m for 42 businesses and expect to play a role in raising £100m for businesses that are part of the Blue Earth community this year.'

Registrations are open and formal applications will open in June 2024 at Blue Earth Forum, as part of London Climate Action Week. A subsequent selection process will see 30 finalists pitch to investors live on stage at Blue Earth Summit 2024.

# **SPEAKERS AND STAGES**

Now in its fourth year, Blue Earth Summit is a supercharged event gathering over 5,000 innovators, startups, scale-ups, global corporations, politicians, adventurers, academics, celebrities and campaigners under one roof at Woolwich Works, to connect, act fast and create planet-positive change.

The event covers three packed days and 10 stages, with 300 speakers including *Dragons' Den's* Deborah Meaden; Ecotricity founder Dale Vince OBE; Iceland CEO Richard Walker; former minister and trustee of the Climate Group, Amber Rudd and Arctic explorer and investor, Ben Saunders. They will join representatives from a range of organisations including Virgin, Diageo, British Business Bank, Rewilding Britain and Blue Marine Foundation.

From city health to tech-enabled conservation, nature, energy, water, fashion waste, finance and investment, every significant climate impact sector will be represented with talks, workshops, clinics and networking opportunities in a bid to optimise learning and inspire action.

# **BLUE EARTH FORUM**

Ahead of Blue Earth Summit, Blue Earth Forum will take place at Protein Studios in Shoreditch, London 25-26 June, during London Climate Week.

The Forum will connect over 200 impact investors with 40 of the most exciting and scalable climate-positive innovators, as well as a variety of

# The BE100 competition

1,000 planet-positive businesses prepare to pitch for £100 million at **Blue Earth Summit 2024** 





CLOCKWISE
Investor and green
entrepreneur Deborah
Meaden at Blue Earth
Summit 2023; BE100
finalists will get to pitch
to investors with access
to £100m in funds;
Blue Earth Summit will
gather an audience of
5,000 innovators



expert speakers. These include Claire McKenzie, producer of the film *Six Inches of Soil*; Andrew Wordsworth, co-founder of Sustainable Ventures; Simon Hill-Norton, impact investor and former co-owner of Sweaty Betty and Sophie Bidwell, impact investor at Re\_Set.

App-optimised technology will enable founders to pre-book pitch slots with like-minded investors, helping to accelerate connections and collaboration. We're looking forward to another successful Blue Earth Summit and hope to see you there.

# **Find out more**

For details about Blue Earth Summit and
Blue Earth Forum visit blueearthsummit.com



# **ARTS FOR IMPACT**

AY Young and the RSA join forces to inspire audiences and communities to act on climate change

o coincide with London Climate Action Week (22-30 June), the RSA is joining forces with Project 17 founder, musician, UN Youth Leader and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) champion AY Young.

The RSA and AY Young will host a day of conversations that will focus on the different ways in which artists can mobilise audiences and communities to champion sustainability and secure a healthier future for everyone, everywhere – and for the Earth on which we all depend.

### **BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS**

AY Young is the creator of the ground-breaking, renewably charged Battery Tour; he's teaming up with RSA Events and bringing his expertise in 'Music for Impact' to co-curate a takeover day at RSA House in central London. Many of the activities are open to the public and will be livestreamed for global access.

In a high-energy lunchtime panel session, AY will lead a discussion exploring how to break down the barriers and bridge the divides that are preventing us from meeting the UN's 17 SDGs.

# **ACHIEVING THE SDGS**

Leading figures from culture, industry and civil society will share insights into how we can foster the cross-sector collaboration that will be essential to achieve the goals, which sit at the heart of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a blueprint for peace and prosperity.

The goals are an urgent call for action by all countries through a global, cross-sectoral partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand in hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

# **'ASK ME ANYTHING'**

We know that the worlds of music, culture and art have a massive role to play in making progress on the SDGs. But how do young people starting out in the industry navigate a path that connects their creative talent to their social change mission?

AY will talk about his career as a producer and performer, supporting acts from Wyclef Jean to Wiz Khalifa, founding Project 17 and creating the Battery Tour. He will also be joined by artists and musicians who are pursuing sustainable pathways through the industry, including singer-songwriter Alex Hepburn.

Conversations will include People. Environment. Achievement. (P.E.A.) Awards founder Jarvis Smith, musician and social impact storyteller Timo Peach and sustainable finance communications specialist Sarisher Mann, among others. Later in the day, young creatives are invited to an 'Ask me Anything' session with AY on sustainability and artistry in the music business.

# **MAKING AN IMPACT**

The RSA has been at the forefront of significant social impact since 1754. Through field-leading policy research, innovative ideas platforms and a unique global network of Fellows, the RSA today pursues a 'Design for Life' mission, working collectively to enable people, places and the planet to flourish in harmony.

This event, in collaboration with Project 17, BNP Paribas and London Climate Action Week, is an unmissable invitation to unite, innovate and propel the global sustainability agenda – and the regenerative agenda at the heart of the RSA – forward.

### **Find out more**

Sign up for your free place now at thersa.org/lcaw



# HERO PRODUCTS

Introducing our World Environment Day Heroes!
We've picked these products because we believe they are all best in their class for people and the planet.
They represent simple, sustainable switches that will help to keep you, your home and the planet healthy – without compromising on performance!

View all our Heroes at mygreenpod.com/heroes



# **APEAL WORLD ACV**

This great-tasting organic apple cider vinegar drink has functional benefits and is a delicious way to maintain energy and curb cravings.

mygreenpod.com/heroes/
apeal-world-acv

# **BETTER FOOD TRADERS**

Buy delicious, seasonal groceries and organic veg boxes from local growers and ethical traders who prioritise people and the planet.

mygreenpod.com/heroes/
better-food-traders



# **FOOD & DRINK**



# **ZERO WASTE BULK FOODS**

The UK's only Soil Association
Organic certified zero-waste
store, ZWBF is on a mission
to prove groceries can be
supplied in reusable packaging
while meeting rigorous
organic standards.

mygreenpod.com/heroes/ zero-waste-bulk-foods

# **PURE ORGANIC VODKA**

An ultra-premium organic vodka with a fruity twist from 100% natural ingredients. mygreenpod.com/heroes/pure-organic-peach-grapefruit-vodka



# **ARTS & FASHION**



# VALLEY FEST 2024

2024 marks the 10th anniversary of this family-friendly festival, celebrating the best of local food, music and sustainable living. Set against the stunning backdrop of Chew Valley Lake, the festival hosts an impressive lineup of live music performances, culinary delights from local producers and engaging activities for all ages. Expect hands-on workshops and wellness sessions, vibrant markets and eco-friendly initiatives in this celebration of community, culture and environmental awareness. The warm, inclusive atmosphere has made Valley Fest a muchanticipated event in the region.

mygreenpod.com/heroes/ valley-fest

# TOP 5

# JUNE SWITCHES

1

Save packing space and the planet this summer with incognito's Second Skin Suncream – a tri-action sunscreen, insect repellent and moisturiser for use at home and abroad.

@incognitoUK

mygreenpod.com/heroes/ incognito-secondskin-suncream

2

Slow down for an ethical adventure this summer: Flight Free Europe is Lonely Planet's first guide dedicated to no-fly travel, featuring 80 inspiring itineraries to explore by train, boat, bike or foot.

@lonelyplanet mygreenpod.com/heroes/

lonely-planet-flightfree-europe

3

Unlock radiant skin this summer with GinGingers Apple Cider Vinegar Gel – a multipurpose natural skincare gel to balance pH, tone, moisturise and much (much) more.

#GinGingers

mygreenpod.com/heroes/ gingingers-apple-cidervinegar-gel

Л

Readers in Norfolk and Suffolk can switch to organic veg boxes packed with seasonal, local produce from Goodery.

> @GooderyUK mygreenpod.com/ heroes/goodery

> > 5

Put an end to unwanted presents (and waste): mark any special occasion with the gift of a tree from 9Trees CIC.

#9Trees

mygreenpod.com/heroes/ 9trees-tree-gift

# Jarv's rules The evolution of sustainability

Jarvis Smith believes we need to look beyond the easy options and listen to Mother Nature instead

ver the last 15 years I have watched 'sustainability' get watered down, like a glass full of melting ice cubes in a what was once quite a tasty G&T.

I'm not having a dig at people or businesses (well, maybe a little one); legislation is lacking and, while the legal landscape around green claims is changing, it's not happening fast enough.

### THE 'QUICK FIX' MYTH

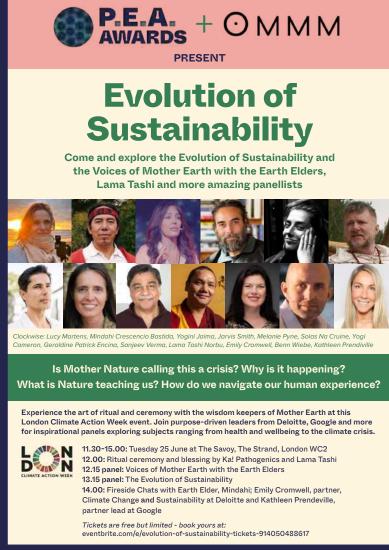
I've noticed that many people trying to be more 'sustainable' will, perhaps understandably, go for the easy options, retrofitting lifestyles and businesses with more sustainable practices – as long as they don't change the status quo too much.

One example is plastic, which is now everywhere – even in breast milk. The war on plastic has become hugely popular, and presents straightforward ways businesses and citizens can make a tangible difference to our environment. People have started to shop differently, recycle more effectively and generally be more aware of the plastic in their lives. Entrepreneurs have created new products, such as plastic-free laundry sheets, and refill services that help reduce demand for virgin plastics.

But packaging isn't the only part of a product that makes an impact on our environment, and it's not right to claim a plastic-free bottle of toxic irritants and synthetic polymers ('liquid plastics') is a better option for the environment. Time and again we see products with formulations that are more polluting than their counterparts in plastic packaging.

Big multinationals have adopted quick fixes, such as making sure the lids stay attached to bottles so they don't get separated and float off into the ocean, without stopping to look at how the contents could be improved to reduce the harm caused to people and planet.

If we are going to get to the core of the problem and find real solutions, we need to be looking at



things in a multidimensional, holistic and inclusive way. So how do we do that?

# **TIME TO EVOLVE**

First we must expand our awareness and our consciousness beyond the limitations of what we are being told is acceptable. It's completely clear that large corporations don't want to change things that are making them a lot of money, so the change has to come from us.

The planet and the universe are constantly evolving; our own human history is no more than a tiny blip in the Earth's history, which is itself a

small blip in the history of the cosmos. So if everything is constantly evolving, yet we as humans continue to be the same (or worse), that isn't good. This is where the evolution of sustainability comes in.

We've seen sustainability get watered down, but things don't necessarily have to get worse before they get better.

### **WISER WAYS**

Wisdom keepers still honour and respect Mother Nature as a wise, conscious being, way more knowledgeable than us humans who, despite everything we now know about the crisis we face, continue on a slippery, oily treadmill to our doom.

But is Mother Nature calling this a crisis too? Or would she describe it as an opportunity to remember our true nature – the part in us that is connected to everything there is, will be and has already been? The bit of us that never dies – the connection to the divine, the sacred ways, the spirit or soul, the creation? I don't mean some religious deity here, I mean the spirit that is us.

Before religion, politics and big business, perhaps we all lived knowing we are part of a much bigger system; we trusted our connection to nature and that she would provide everything we needed. Man has unfortunately capitalised her for profit, but now we have an opportunity to unshackle ourselves by being inspired by those Indigenous elders and shamanic wisdom

We are all Indigenous to this planet, but born into a system that has managed to disconnect us from the very thing that can save us. If we can take a moment to invite an awakening of the truths within us, we might all awaken from our slumber, leap into action and take our responsibility as a gift from Mother Nature who is, I believe, simply nudging us awake.

keepers who still live in harmony with nature.

If you feel inspired, please come and join us at the Evolution of Sustainability event on 25 June at the Savoy, London, where we can explore these opportunities together.

# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY FASHION

Model twins **Brett** and **Scott Staniland** explain why more fashion brands should put nature in the boardrooms

he fashion world absolutely loves World Environment Day, and will use it to sell you almost anything.

Brands jump on performative activism to make you think you can only subscribe to World Environment Day by purchasing one of their items, though in most cases only a fraction of the price you pay will actually support the cause.

Many people will rightly be shouting 'It's Environment Day every day' – and for many of us, it is. But how important is 'the environment' to fashion brands? Is it just a natural marketing tool for them, or are there any brands that are putting the environment in the boardrooms?

# **CHANGING THE SYSTEM**

For decades the capitalism-fuelled fashion industry has focused on growth at all costs; where does degrowth sit in all of this, and how can we switch to a system that allows for profit while paying equal attention to ethics?

This is more of a system-change question and of course legislation, which we've spoken about before, is a hugely useful tool when it comes to shifting the system.

France, for example, has proposed a surcharge on the extremely low-cost items sold by fast fashion brands; the money raised would be used to subsidise the additional costs paid by sustainable brands, to make them more economically accessible and, ultimately, to price out fast fashion.

The UK is a little behind on this front, but British beauty brand Faith in Nature has chosen to operate in a degrowth kind of way. It has given nature a seat on the board of directors – essentially asking the question 'what would nature say?' at every step when the big decisions are made.

It was proposed this move could lead to a change in UK corporate law, yet it took an entire year for a second British company (House of Hackney) to follow. This was aided by new guidelines and studies from Faith in Nature.

# **BETTER BUSINESS**

Brands that subscribe to the Better Business Act are part of a movement to change the law to ensure brands operate in a more responsible way and define a specific corporate purpose beyond financial profit.

So where are the fashion brands? Well for now, not one of them has put nature on the board – and while companies with B Corp certification have mades people and the planet stakeholders, more can definitely be done.

# **BRANDS VS BUYERS**

If we look at previous years as examples of what to expect from World Environment Day, it's pretty safe to predict that many brands will start telling us 'we' all need to do more.

Businesses will try to foster a connection with consumers and make us feel we are all in it together. They'll likely tell us that we need to recycle more and shop more responsibly,



completely ignoring the elephant in the room: overproduction. They'll use World Environment Day to push the slightly less awful collections they now make, without mentioning they still aim to increase production and aren't cutting out any of the existing (terrible) lines they produce.

When we look at the problem, fashion brands can do far more than we can as individuals.

# **AVOIDING GREENWASH**

I don't want to be disheartened when these important days come round, but with so much useless noise from the fashion sector, it's hard not to disengage.

For now, keep your wits about you and be aware that these events are used by many as marketing tools, Get Out of Jail Free cards or a big distraction from how dire the current state of fashion actually is.

We urge you to connect with the brands, creators and writers doing the work all year round, who won't be in it just for the profits and aren't trying to make you feel bad about yourself – who genuinely care about what they do and how they do it. These are the brands that are leading the way – not the ones shouting the loudest on 05 June.

# Find out more

Stay up to date with
Brett and Scott on
Instagram: @twinbrett
and @twinscott

# **ENVIRONMENT DAY BEAUTY**

Natural beauty expert Janey Lee Grace reveals some of her favourite environment-friendly products



orld Environment
Day (05 June) is a
great opportunity
to focus on how every one of
us can make a real difference.
We need to give Mother Earth

a little extra love; our planet is always there for us – providing us with clean air,

always there for us – providing us with clean air, fresh water and jaw-dropping landscapes – but sadly, from pollution to deforestation, our actions have taken a toll.

It might feel as though there is nothing we can do, but the truth is we can all make a difference. By making conscious buying choices we have the power to change the game and protect our planet.

Small everyday changes can add up to make a big impact and skincare, beauty and wellbeing is the perfect place to start.

Every time you swipe on your moisturiser or lather up with shampoo, you're making a decision that can either help or harm the environment. We need to opt for products with natural ingredients and minimal packaging, and support brands that are committed to sustainability.

Below are a few recommendations – all entries into the Platinum Awards – from my list of current favourites for people and the planet.

# **ENERGISED SKINCARE**

AEOS (Active Energised Organic Skincare) really is an 'alchemy of beauty' brand. It uses ancient

techniques, the spagyric tinctures of crystals and gems, super-hydrating ingredients and cutting-edge technologies to deliver therapeutic effects for body, mind and soul. A core ingredient is the spelt oil, produced from the biodynamic spelt grain grown on the founder's farm. Its healing properties for the skin are incredible.

You can use the Realive Serum – an age-defying serum for the face and the delicate eye area – to visibly plump, smooth and revitalise skin to restore maximum radiance. The serum contains alchemical essences of opal, amethyst, charoite, turquoise, emerald, quartz and chrysoprase to help rejuvenate the skin and balance emotions.

### A HEALTHY BOOST

Beauty comes from within and you can give your skin a boost by unleashing the potential of vitamin C, a potent antioxidant and essential nutrient that supports numerous processes in the human body.

LipoC Liquid Vitamin C supports a healthy immune system and nervous system, as well as helping with the reduction of tiredness and fatigue. It also supports collagen production for healthy skin, gums and bones. LipoC is absorbed into the cell wall for improved efficacy, and is thought to be up to 30 times more effective than standard oral vitamin C powders and capsules.

A little organic acerola cherry has been added, but there are no synthetic flavourings, soy, citric acid or alcohol.

### **ORGANIC CLEANSING**

Now let's focus on sustainability. Natracare achieved the first COSMOS Organic certification for its Organic Cleansing Make-up Removal Wipes. They are plastic free, suitable for sensitive skin and made without alcohol or synthetic fragrances.

These cleansing face wipes have an enriched formula that includes vitamin E, aloe vera and organic essential oils of apricot and chamomile to soothe, protect, moisturise and refresh delicate skin. They can gently cleanse and remove waterproof mascara and tough lipstick, and are suitable for composting.

### **AWARD-WINNING WELLBEING**

The Platinum Awards include categories for therapists, coaches, wellbeing experts and authors, as well as beauty and wellbeing products. Check out the awards if you are interested in promoting your natural brand or nominating one of your favourites.

Everyone who nominates or votes will go into our prize draw to win a huge hamper of natural and organic goodies!



# **Find out more**

To nominate or enter your natural beauty brand in the Platinum Awards, visit janeyleegrace.com/your-vote





LEFT TO RIGHT AEOS Realive Serum (£60.30, 30ml); LipoC Liquid Vitamin C (£43.95, 30 sachets); Natracare Organic Cleansing Make-up Removal Wipes (£4.65, 20 wipes)



ian Louise Colson's journey into the world of organic skincare commenced when she developed adult acne after enduring two heartbreaking miscarriages, subsequent to two rounds of IVF, just before the first Covid lockdown.

The hormonal changes wreaked havoc on Sian's skin, and the natural skincare products she tried proved frustratingly inefficient. Sian resolved to find a genuine solution, and after numerous attempts she developed a formulation that miraculously cleared the acne within a week.

Entrepreneurs often refer to their businesses as their babies, but Sian's company, Obvs Skincare, is particularly precious; it was created using the money that Sian had saved for a third round of IVF. Her hope is that the products – each of which is handmade by Sian – are cherished for all the love that goes into them. 'My goal is to provide effective, natural solutions for problem skin, so people can get healthy, beautiful skin without compromise to their skin barrier or the planet', she says.

### **SKINCARE & SIDE-EFFECTS**

Skin problems can be caused by many factors, from genetics and hormones to stress, diet, environmental factors such as pollution and sun exposure and even harsh skincare products.

Treatments for acne can be effective, but many – including some topical medications – come with side-effects like dryness, irritation and sun sensitivity. 'I was actually prescribed some oral tablets for my acne (it was that bad) when I was undergoing IVF', Sian tells us. 'Luckily I read the 'possible side-effects', one of which was infertility – while I was undergoing IVF! Needless to say I didn't take them!'

Many mainstream products rely on aggressive chemicals that can irritate or damage the skin in the long run. These chemicals can also be harmful to the environment when they enter waterways. 'I tried everything on the market, but nothing truly addressed my issues without harsh chemicals', Sian says. 'At the same time, some of the natural products I turned to lacked efficacy, while others weren't formulated effectively enough to deliver results on deeper skin layers.'

# **A BETTER WAY**

Sian believed there was a better way; she knew the potential of natural ingredients and was determined to find a solution that worked. 'I was surprised by the lack of effective, natural solutions readily available – for problem skin in particular', she says; 'my research revealed a wealth of powerful botanical extracts with proven benefits for skin health.'

Our skin is our biggest organ and absorbs the majority of what we put on it, so Sian wanted to make sure she was using safe ingredients of the highest quality, especially while pregnant. When the pregnancy unexpectedly ended, she carried on using her own natural formulations and hasn't turned back since. 'My dyslexia has been a gift in this situation', Sian shares; 'I was able to formulate a product that no one else has done – and it worked!'

Obvs Skincare's flagship product – the Intensive Skin Recovery Cream – has transformed lives since



**Sian Louise Colson** is on a mission to revolutionise the face of skincare – and transform lives along the way

its launch in 2021. It's excellent for soothing irritation, reducing redness and promoting healing for acne and eczema; testing from the Oxford Biosciences lab confirms it's safe for all ages, meaning the formulation can also be used to relieve nappy rash.

The cream contains a unique blend of unrefined, organic ingredients that work in harmony to nourish and repair the skin. It achieves great results without relying on harsh ingredients or steroids.

'Like the Intensive Skin Recovery Cream, all our formulations prioritise both efficacy and organic ingredients', Sian says. 'Our products are formulated with potent natural ingredients that are proven to address skin concerns, while remaining gentle and free from harsh chemicals. Additionally, our commitment to sustainability sets us apart.'

# **ECO CREDENTIALS**

A self-confessed free spirit with scientific inclinations, Sian knew that when friends and family encouraged her to launch her skincare venture, it had to embody the principles of being organic,



biodegradable, vegan and sustainable (obvs). Obvs Skincare is certified COSMOS Organic by the Soil Association, and also carries Leaping Bunny and Vegan Society certifications to confirm its ethical and environmental standards. A tree is planted with every order and Obvs Skincare has partnered with Shopify Planet to offset all its deliveries.

'Each credential is important to us', Sian explains. 'Sustainability is at the core of everything we do, from sourcing to manufacturing. Organic ingredients ensure the purity and efficacy of our products, while biodegradable packaging minimises our environmental impact. Vegan and cruelty-free practices align with our ethical values.'

# **FINDING BALANCE**

Sian recognises that while plastic-free packaging is commendable, it's important to consider the overall impact. Similarly, she accepts that wrapping organic ingredients in virgin plastic packaging creates a conflict. 'We strive to find the perfect balance', Sian explains; 'effective products with a minimal environmental footprint. Consumers should have the best of both worlds, and that's what I try to provide in all our skincare.'

The approach is working, and Obvs Skincare was honoured with the Start-Up Business of the Year award at the Sustainability Awards, hosted by Chris Packham CBE.

'We are constantly innovating and developing new products to address a wider range of skin concerns', Sian tells us. 'I am currently formulating a shampoo for dry scalps and an SPF – which is a lot harder than it sounds! We are also committed to expanding our sustainable practices throughout our supply chain.' Obvs Skincare is one to watch – and we can't wait to see where it goes next.

# **Find out more**

Information and tips about treating problem skin naturally is at obvs-skincare.co.uk

# ANEW WELLBEING FRONTIER

This pioneering company is helping to change our approach to mental health and wellness

t a time when the pressures of modern life are taking a toll on mental health, Rio-Vitalise is emerging as a beacon of hope and innovation.

The company is on a mission to redefine wellness through a holistic blend of natural alternative medicines, sustainable practices and immersive wellness retreats. The goal is not only to heal mental illness, but also to promote overall wellness and create a ripple effect of positive change across the globe. It's an ambitious and inspiring mission.

The company seeks to nourish the mind, body and soul by integrating cannabis, psilocybin and other natural alternative medicines with entertainment and retreats in a comprehensive wellness strategy.

With operations in Spain, Uruguay and America, Rio-Vitalise is able to share diverse wellness experiences with people from all walks of life.

# **ECO RETREATS, FARMING AND ENERGY**

At the core of Rio-Vitalise's operations is a commitment to sustainability, and one of the standout aspects is its sustainable wellness retreats. These retreats are not just



places for relaxation but also sanctuaries for balance, healing and self-discovery.

Guided by eco-friendly principles, the retreats are designed to offer a serene environment where individuals can rejuvenate and reconnect with themselves.

The company is pioneering sustainable agriculture by cultivating cannabis and other plants that contribute to carbon sequestration and mitigate CO2 emissions. The renewable energy initiatives, including solar and hydropower systems, ensure operations are powered by clean energy sources.

Rio-Vitalise has partnered with AI and crypto mining companies to maximise the use of surplus energy, creating additional revenue streams and demonstrating an innovative approach to sustainable business practices. This commitment to sustainability not only benefits the environment but also enhances the company's appeal to eco-conscious consumers and ethical investors.

# **THE RIO WAY**

A keen advocate of mental health, Rio-Vitalise is challenging traditional pharmaceutical solutions by offering holistic, natural alternatives, inspired by the personal journey of Rio-Vitalise founder Alfie Ruffell.

Alfie's dad, Ricky Ruffell, was given six months to live and told he'd never walk further than 250 yards a day; that was five years ago – and today he's walking 10,000 steps daily. For Alfie, this dramatic turnaround highlighted the transformative power of CBD and the other natural medicines Ricky had turned to.

After losing two friends to suicide just over a year ago, Alfie chose to place the focus at Rio-Vitalise firmly on mental health. These personal experiences have added deeper layers of authenticity and passion to the company's mission.

The 'Rio Way Movement' encapsulates this mission, promoting a healthy, balanced lifestyle through education and inspiration. By advocating for natural remedies and transformative experiences in sustainable tourism, Rio-Vitalise wants to help individuals to embrace holistic wellness and contribute to a healthier world.

# THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

The team at Rio-Vitalise understands the power of media in spreading its message; the journey is being documented for the creation of a reality TV series, *The Rio Way*, which follows the Ruffell family as it transitions from city life to sustainable farming in rural Spain.

The series not only entertains but also educates viewers about the benefits of natural alternative medicines and sustainable living.

By partnering with health experts, influencers and celebrities, Rio-Vitalise is breaking down stigmas and promoting mental health and wellness to a broader audience. The series promises to be both enlightening and entertaining, making it a powerful tool for raising awareness and driving social change.

### A GLOBAL NETWORK

Rio-Vitalise's success to date has been bolstered by a robust network of partnerships. Zenith Global, a specialist in cannabis and psilocybin research, has provided a unique licence to carry out operations. Accor, one of the world's largest hotelier companies, has provided access to the spa facilities at its chain of 5\* hotels and UNIFY, the largest broadcasting platform on the planet for world peace, will be creating content throughout Rio-Vitalise's journey.

CULT Agency, the fastest-growing beauty and fashion agency in the US and UK, will help Rio-Vitalise get its products – including cosmetics and a hemp gym wear line – into high-street retailers around the world. These partnerships will help Rio-Vitalise to deliver on its promises and expand market reach.

The collaborations are not just about business; they are about creating a community dedicated to ending mental illness and

The goal is not only to heal mental illness, but also to promote overall wellness and create a ripple effect of positive change across the globe. It's an ambitious and inspiring mission.

promoting overall wellness. By leveraging the strengths of its partners, Rio-Vitalise is able to offer a comprehensive suite of wellness products and services that cater to a global audience.

# **JOIN THE WELLNESS REVOLUTION**

Rio-Vitalise is a visionary force for positive change. By integrating natural alternative medicines, sustainable practices and immersive wellness experiences, the company is redefining how society approaches mental health and overall wellness. The commitment to transparency, education and advocacy sets it apart as a leader in the wellness industry.

The company is inviting investors to join this transformative journey, and support a cause that aims to end mental illness and promote holistic wellbeing. This is your chance to help create a healthier, more balanced world – one retreat, one natural remedy and one mindful practice at a time.

# Find out more

■ Information about The Rio Way and how you can join the journey is at rio-vitalise.com





CLOCKWISE
Rio-Vitalise crops are fed by La Rio Cabriel on
the Valle del Cabriel Biosphere Reserve in Spain;
Alfie with his brother; Alfie harvesting crops;
a wellness session 'The Rio Way'





Mark Machin, business development manager at Soil Association Certification, explores the connection between organic farming and World Environment Day 2024

oth founded in 1973, the timeline of World Environment Day is synonymous with that of Soil Association Certification.

This year's World Environment Day theme – land restoration, desertification and drought resilience – got me thinking about the way we farm and its impact on soil health, and in turn the ability of soil to respond to water security issues.

While we have experienced periods of drought in our own climate, our island remains predominantly a wet one; after a particularly long and wet spring, there is a flip side to water resilience.

Changes of land use can help slow the movement of water on our uplands; this means that spreading the burden of high rainfall and improved soil health can help agricultural land hold more water before it becomes a problem.

Waterlogged fields are not great places for the heavy machinery needed at the beginning of a growing season. In fact, many growers have had to delay planting this year, reducing the overall productivity of some farms and putting certain farming business models at risk.

# **AGROFORESTRY IN ACTION**

One approach farmers are adopting to mitigate water issues is agroforestry – the practice of planting

trees as an integral part of the farm in order to boost the land's productivity.

Agroforestry is a good example of farmers thinking about diversity and using trees to improve water flow across the land.

A recent visit to one of our organic farmers, who is experimenting with agroforestry, showed water management in the soil in action.

The soil on a piece of farmland there had previously been degraded by a more intensive approach. It had become waterlogged to such an extent it was not going to be suitable for a horticultural enterprise.

The farmer has introduced a mixed tree crop and small poultry activity, which has turned the future of this piece of land around. A few years into the project, the soil is building fertility thanks to a more varied root system, and draining better than before thanks to improved soil health.

In the early ears, the chickens helped to control competing plants around the young trees and made the land more profitable for the farmer during the early period, when the trees were not cropping or bringing in an income.

What was a problem field for the farmer has become a case study for how we might produce food for a changing world.

# **FARMING AND WATERWAYS**

With only 3% of total agricultural land practising agroforestry, this approach is still in a minority and there is a steep learning curve for farmers transitioning to producing food in this way.

It is perhaps reassuring to read in the news that water companies have an increasing awareness about the impact of farming on our waterways.

Reading in Farmers Weekly, I see a number of water companies creating financial packages for farmers to manage the land regeneratively.

Severn and Trent Water believes that for every £1 it invests in such schemes, it saves up to £20 in water treatment costs, plus a further £4 in wider environmental benefits – not to mention reducing flood risk in vulnerable areas.

Left: Aerial view of the agroforestry system at Wakelyns, Suffolk; below: Silvoarable agroforestry integrates arable crops and trees



# **LAND USE AND THE SDGS**

Turning back to the UN's World Environment Day, carbon sequestration in farming and better forest management are among the most cost-effective ways to reduce net emissions and deliver the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In fact, after energy production and use, farming and land use is the biggest mitigating factor we have in our sustainability armoury.

While finance may encourage farmers to make changes in how they look after our food system, we all have a part to play in sustaining that change.

Using our consumer choices to back a different approach to agriculture is one of the singular things we can do to maintain a market for pioneering farmers who are transitioning our food system.

An individual consumer's purchasing may seem insignificant when facing global threats, but – perhaps like the water companies – small purchases can amplify to bigger returns for nature and water resilience for society.

# **Find out more**

■ Learn about agroforestry at soilassociation.org

# Farming healthy soils

This regenerative organic farming project is helping to improve soil carbon stocks on UK farms

ecades of industrial farming have taken their toll on our planet, and Yeo Valley Organic believes that the solution lies beneath our feet – in our soils.

# **SOIL: OUR NATURAL ALLY**

All life on Earth starts with soil, which helps to grow 95% of our food. Regenerative organic farming helps to build healthy soil – which Yeo Valley Organic believes is one of the most effective ways to fight climate change while providing people with healthy, nutritious food.

Regenerative approaches, while unique to every farm, share a common endpoint of benefiting the entire ecosystem and its processes.

'As farmers and custodians of the soil, it's time to recognise that our natural ally is right under our feet', said Yeo Valley Organic's Tim Mead. 'We believe that when the farming system is truly 'regenerating' and putting nature first, it is good for all: the animals, people and planet.'

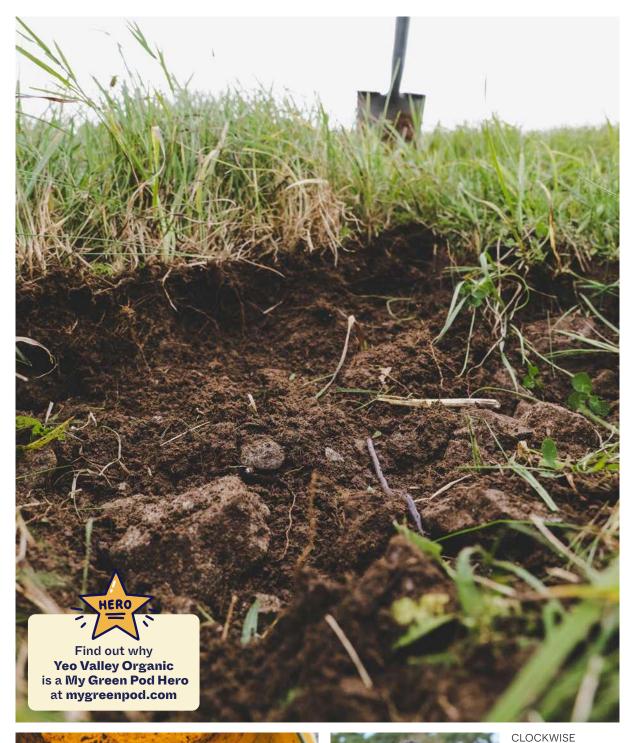
# **CARBON IN UK FARMLAND**

Yeo Valley Organic is using education and research to grow the UK's regenerative organic farming movement. The family farm has been working with expert partners and farmer-led social enterprise the Farm Carbon Toolkit (FCT) to help more of Britain's organic farmers to understand the real impact of soil carbon stocks on their own farms, plus their supplying farms, and how improving soil health can mitigate climate change.

The project started back in 2021 by analysing current soil carbon stocks and soil health to understand the conditions of each field on the farms. The objective is to deliver improvements to soil health and carbon storage over five years by working collaboratively to change processes.

# SUPPORTING CARBON SEQUESTRATION

The FCT has led the practical soil measuring of Yeo Valley Organic's supplying farms and has been engaging farmers about the health of their soils, offering practical support and mentoring on how they can better support their soil health, productivity and carbon sequestration.







Healthy soil is one of the most effective ways to tackle climate change; Yeo Valley Organic's Tim Mead; soil carbon stocks on British farms are being measured by Farm Carbon Toolkit and Yeo Valley Organic

As an organic brand for over 25 years, Yeo Valley Organic is used to working in harmony with nature. The family farm's organic dairy farmers support the whole food system – including the soils, animals and biodiversity – and ensure that, as far as possible, they are working together in a way that has a positive impact on the British countryside. They are excited to continue working on this soil carbon project over the coming years.

# **Find out more**

■ Discover more about the Yeo Valley Regenerative Organic Farming Project at regenerative.yeovalley.co.uk

# Go SLOW in the kitchen

River Cottage chef **Gelf Alderson** shares a seasonal recipe to celebrate seasonal, local, organic and wild food

t River Cottage, our biggest goal is to teach and inspire people to grow, source and cook food in ways that enrich lives, increase wellbeing and connect people more closely to natural and ethical sources of food.

We have a SLOW (seasonal, local, organic and wild) approach to sourcing and using ingredients, and across our East Devon farm, award-winning cookery school and café we invite guests to absorb this food philosophy for themselves.

Here on the farm we grow our own organic ingredients, look after our own livestock and work closely with local suppliers who share our values as we teach, feed and inspire guests from all over the world. Food integrity, good health and sustainability are at the heart of what we do.

We've enjoyed exploring fresh new dishes that showcase the spoils of the season; the recipe below features spring asparagus and offers a low-waste solution for your stale sourdough!

### **Find out more**

- Gelf Alderson's River Cottage Great Salads is available in hardback for £20 from all good bookshops and online stores.
- Book River Cottage cookery courses, dining and bespoke events at rivercottage.net

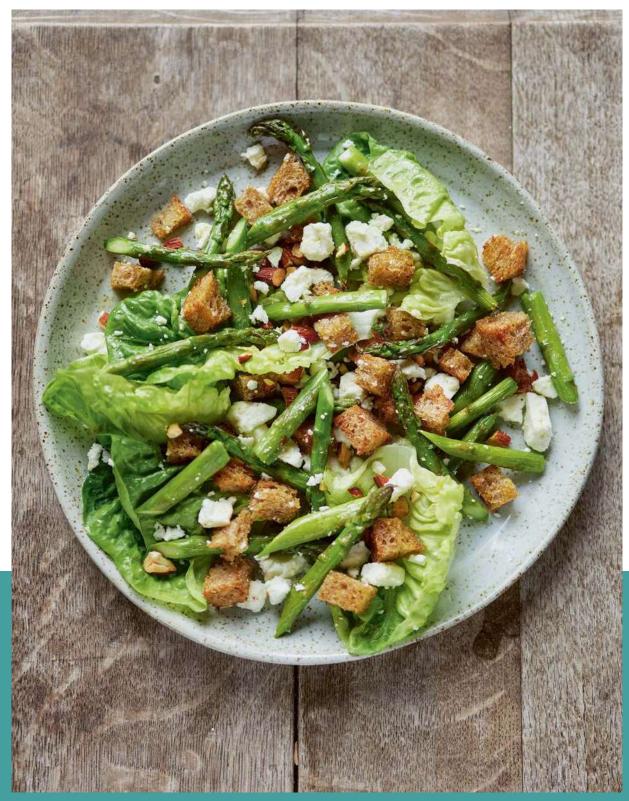
# ROAST ASPARAGUS, FETA, ALMONDS AND SOURDOUGH CROUTONS

Taken from River Cottage Great Salads, by Gelf Alderson

Asparagus is one of the first signs of spring: as the weather warms slightly the brilliant green spears start to poke through the earth. Typically, the short asparagus season ends around the summer solstice, so the last of the crop heralds the start of summer. For this salad the spears are roasted to enhance their amazing flavour while retaining a good crunch.

# Ingredients

- 2 slices slightly stale sourdough or goodquality wholemeal bread, crusts removed
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 100g almonds (skin on), roughly chopped
- About 500g asparagus (at least 16 spears)
- ■1 little gem lettuce, divided into leaves
- 150g good-quality feta
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Sea salt and black pepper



# Method

- Preheat the oven to 230°C/Fan 210°C/Gas 8. Cut the bread into 1cm cubes and place in a bowl with 2 tbsp of the olive oil and some salt and pepper. Toss to coat.
- Scatter the bread cubes on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 5 minutes until golden brown and crunchy. Tip the croutons on to a plate and allow to cool.
- Spread the chopped almonds out on the baking tray and toast in the oven for 3 minutes, then set aside to cool.
- Break off the tough ends of the asparagus and cut the spears in half on the diagonal. Place on a baking tray, trickle over the remaining 1 tbsp olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
- Roast the asparagus in the oven for 4 minutes, then remove and set aside for a few minutes to cool slightly.
- Transfer the roasted asparagus to a large bowl and add the almonds, leaves and croutons. Crumble in the feta, then trickle over the lemon juice. Add a touch more seasoning if you feel it needs it. Serve.
- Once the asparagus season is over, grill plump spring onions instead.

# COULD CHOCOLATE SAVE THE WORLD?

With ancient links to the sacred, could cacao help raise our vibration and reconnect us to nature?

hroughout its history, cacao has been revered as a sacred plant medicine, and often used in ceremonies by those looking to reach a higher state of awareness. The name of the tree that produces the beans – *Theobroma cacao* – translates to 'food of the gods'.

Today, cacao is making a comeback as a highly nutritious superfood and a plant medicine we can safely use to raise our own energy vibration and open up our hearts.

For Constandia ('Dandy') Christofi, founder of Dandy's Raw Choc, the power of cacao lies in its ability to foster a reconnection to the Earth and a return to our authentic selves.

'With cacao the ritualistic element is important because it takes us into the space between ordinary time, sometimes referred to as the dreamtime', Dandy tells us. 'In this transcendent space, we are able to open our hearts on an energetic level and connect to each other, to ourselves and to the Earth on a much deeper and extraordinary level.'

# YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Dandy has over 20 years' experience in wellbeing – spanning shamanic healing, feng shui, naturopathic nutrition and brain/heart coherence meditation – and has always been fascinated by the role of nutrition in wellbeing and self-healing.

'I have personally found nutrition to be a key component of wellbeing and healing', Dandy shares. 'In my experience, taking care of the physical body with nutritional foods not only maintains an optimal level of health, but also helps us to heal disease.'

Dandy was inspired to create a range of raw chocolate after experiencing multiple intolerances to mainstream chocolate. With Dandy's Raw Choc she has combined her passions for chocolate, nutrition and holistic wellbeing while also bringing awareness of our need to reconnect with nature.

# **GOOD VIBRATIONS**

One of the many ways Dandy's Raw Choc differs from mass-produced chocolate is that it is handmade in small batches and heated very gently at 38 degrees. This maintains a raw state that keeps all of the nutritional value and delicate enzymes intact.

Dandy's Raw Choc contains a combination of superfoods that alchemise its unique flavour, providing natural sweetness without refined sugar. The gentle heating process creates a nutrient-dense food that satisfies the taste buds – and you don't need much to feel satisfied.

'Everything has an energetic vibration', Dandy explains, 'and a high-vibrational food has pure, natural content that has not been denatured







CLOCKWISE Dandy's Raw Choc contains nutritious ingredients such as raisins and dried activated buckwheat (Fruity Crunch), orange extract (Orange Burst), vanilla (Just Vanilla) and almonds (Mint Almond)

through intense processing. The benefits of highvibrational foods are that our bodies recognise the purity instantly and take in all of the benefits – on all levels of our being.'

# **RESPECTING NATURE**

As reconnection to nature is such an important goal for Dandy's Raw Chocolate, organic certification was key. 'Being certified organic is really important to me as with organic certification, I am able to show my commitment to providing a truly organic product to the consumer', Dandy says.

It was also important for the raw chocolate to be wrapped in home-compostable packaging, as for Dandy this demonstrates one of the ways in which we are able to respect our bodies and the Earth at the same time and without compromise.

# **A RETURN TO SELF**

Dandy, a holistic therapist and founder of Silverdragon Wellbeing, believes this respect for the self is more important now than ever. 'I feel that it's currently harder for us to connect to our authentic selves', Dandy shares. 'We live in a digital world where our attention is constantly being taken to a screen. A disconnection from nature closes the heart centre where our authentic self resides.'

Dandy's work is all about assisting others to return to their authentic selves through their own personal healing journey. 'That journey may begin with a nutrition consultation, a feng shui analysis or a shamanic healing session – but the journey always leads to a return to the heart, to the place where our authentic self dwells', she tells us.

# **RECONNECTING TO THE SACRED**

For those who want to return to (and live) their authentic selves, Dandy advises spending some time in nature every day, and feeling gratitude for the beauty in our lives and for the simple things that are so precious to life.

'Outside all the noise, you can find that place of stillness that resides within every single one of us', Dandy says. 'It is here that you will find the return to your authentic self. And of course, having some Dandy's Raw Choc will open your heart vibration to help you move away from fear and into love, encouraging a reconnection to the sacred.'

# **Find out more**

■ Meet the bars, view the ingredients and discover where to meditate and connect with the essence of cacao at silverdragonwellbeing.com/dandys-raw-choc

# PLANTS

ON

We spoke to BOSH! for some plant-based recipe inspiration that won't break the bank

# PLATES

lant-based pioneers and chefs Henry Firth and Ian Theasby, childhood friends from Sheffield, joined forces to create BOSH! back in 2016, united by a mission to 'get plants on plates'.

'Our main aim was, and still is, to share our passion for plant-based cooking and do our best to make it more accessible to a wider audience', Henry shares. 'For us, plant-based eating has so many benefits – whether for health, the environment or ethical reasons – and we want to demonstrate that plant-based cooking can be exciting, flavoursome and absolutely delicious.'

'For us it's about inspiring positive change in the way people eat and being more mindful about what we put in our bodies and doing better for the planet and our environment', lan adds. 'We have made it our life's mission to show people how to make delicious plant-based recipes and incorporate a more plant-based approach into their daily lives, as often as they choose.'

The approach has made waves on social media and in bookshops; with vibrant plant-based recipes and an innovative, forward-thinking outlook, BOSH! has sold over 1 million cookbooks and has products in major supermarkets around the world.

# **PLANT-BASED EATING**

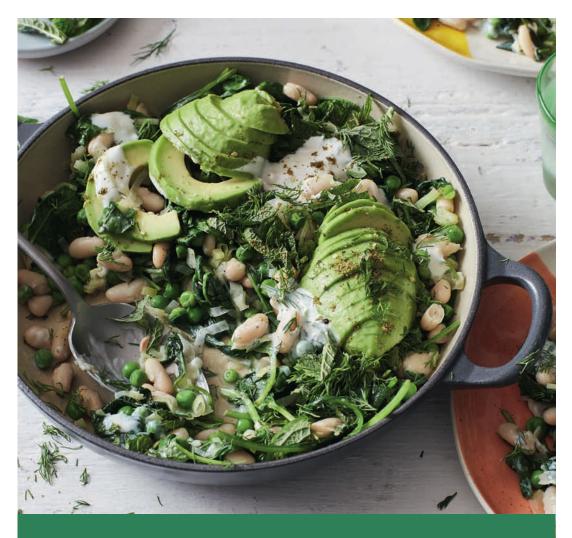
Ian and Henry both used to eat meat every week, and switched to plant-based diets in 2015. 'My decision was off the back of a challenge', Ian explains. 'I wanted to see if I could go veggie for the month of February, and I started doing a lot of reading about vegetarianism. That led me to a fully plant-based diet; it sounded quite interesting as a concept, so I gave it a whirl.'

After a month on plant-based food, lan noticed he was losing weight and his hair was getting thicker. 'I thought it's probably a really good thing for the environment as well', he tells us. 'That's when Henry and I watched *Cowspiracy*, and he went vegan, too.'

For Henry it was all about the planet; he was desperate to find something that was going to help fight climate change but admits he 'wasn't particularly inspired' by lan's venture at first. 'The minute I discovered it was genuinely a better option for the planet, I went plant-based overnight', he says. 'Whether you come at it from health, sustainability or animals, you quickly start to get interested in all the other reasons as well.'

# **ACCESSIBLE RECIPES**

lan and Henry have a track record for veganising traditional meals, crowdpleasers and family favourites – from burgers to Bakewells – but they accept there is a lot of nervousness around plant-based eating. 'There's an idea that you have to be a fantastic cook in order to make plant-based dishes', Henry says. 'That's why with BOSH! we offer incredible meals that are easy to follow, quick to make and absolutely delicious, without breaking the bank or requiring hours of cooking time.'



# **GREEN SHAKSHUKA**

From BOSH! Healthy Vegan / Serves 2

# Ingredients

- ■1 leek
- 2 garlic cloves
- ■1 × 400g tin cannellini beans in water
- 10g fresh mint leaves
- 10g fresh parsley leaves
- ■10g fresh dill
- ■1 ripe avocado
- ■1 tbsp olive oil
- 200g frozen peas
- 200g fresh spinach leaves
- 50g plant-based yoghurt
- 1/2 tsp za'atar
- salt and black pepper
- 4 slices crusty wholemeal bread, to serve

# Before you start

Fine grater or microplane; 1 large frying pan

# Method

First, prep your ingredients. Trim and thinly slice the leek. Peel and grate the garlic. Drain and rinse the cannellini beans. Roughly chop the mint, parsley and dill. Halve and carefully stone the avocado by tapping the stone firmly with the heel of a knife so that it lodges in the pit, then twist and remove. Scoop out and slice the avocado flesh.

Now, start cooking. Heat the olive oil in the large frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the leek and stir for 5 minutes, until softened. Turn down the heat, add the garlic and stir for a further minute. Add the beans and peas and stir for 2 minutes. Add the spinach, one handful at a time, stirring constantly and allowing each batch of spinach to wilt down before adding the next.

Time to plate up. When all the spinach has wilted and the peas are thoroughly defrosted and cooked through, take the pan off the heat, stir through the mint, parsley and dill and season to perfection with salt and pepper. Top with the yoghurt, za'atar and the sliced avocado, and serve with crusty wholemeal bread.

'We have made it our mission to make plant-based food totally accessible to everyone – regardless of your time or financial status', Ian adds. 'We have such an amazing range of recipes – some quick and easy and some more complicated – so we can cater to everyone's needs. We don't want to overcomplicate things so anything that is simple to follow, quick to make and includes delicious flavours is perfect for us.'

### **THE EASY OPTION**

Today it's easier than ever to follow a plant-based diet; food options are increasingly visible in shops and restaurants, making it incredibly convenient to incorporate them into daily life. 'We've got a new range of delicious food that will be landing in hospitality locations all over the country in the very near future', Henry shares. 'We've also been working on a new series of long-form content that will be launching on our YouTube channel at the start of the summer.'

Thanks to digital recipes, tutorials and social media – alongside a dramatic increase in awareness over recent years – plant-based alternatives have now become easy for everyone. Below are two simple summer favourites from BOSH! – any they're perfect for any budget or level of expertise.



CLOCKWISE
Henry Firth (left) and lan
Theasby are on a mission to
get more 'plants on plates';
the BOSH! Vegan Caesar
Salad; the BOSH Green
Shakshuka

# CAESAR SALAD

From BOSH! Healthy Vegan / Serves 4

# Ingredients

- 300g romaine lettuce
- Salt and black pepper
- ■1 tbsp nutritional yeast, to serve (optional)

### For the 'chicken'

- 9 king oyster mushrooms
- ■1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp vegan-friendly chicken seasoning

### For the croutons

- 200g unsliced seeded brown bread
- 2 tsp olive oil
- ■1 tsp dried Italian herbs
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

# For the dressing

- ■1 garlic clove
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- 60g vegan mayonnaise
- ■1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1/2 lemon

# Before you start

Preheat oven to 180°C; line a roasting tin with parchment paper; line a baking tray with parchment paper; fine grater or microplane

# Method

First, prep the 'chicken'. Cut the caps off the king oyster mushrooms and slice them thinly. Pull the prongs of two forks along the length of the mushroom stems, roughly tearing them into 2.5–5cm-long matchsticks. Put the mushrooms in a bowl, drizzle with the olive oil and sprinkle over the chicken seasoning. Toss to combine, making sure the mushrooms are evenly coated with the flavouring. Add the mushrooms to the roasting tin and evenly space. Bake the mushrooms for 25–30 minutes.

Now, make the croutons. Cut the bread into 2.5cm cubes. Put the olive oil, Italian herbs, garlic powder and a pinch of salt and pepper in a bowl and stir to combine. Add the bread cubes and toss to combine, making sure the cubes are well coated. Spread the cubes out on the lined baking tray, put the tray in the oven and bake for 15 minutes, until golden and crispy.

Make the salad dressing. Peel and grate the garlic clove. Put the garlic, nutritional yeast, vegan mayonnaise and white wine vinegar in a mixing bowl. Grate the lemon zest into the bowl, squeeze in the juice and stir to combine. Taste the dressing and season to perfection with salt and pepper. Add a splash of water if the dressing needs loosening.

Assemble the salad. Trim and roughly chop the lettuce. Add the lettuce, the pulled and sliced oyster mushrooms and half the croutons to a serving bowl and toss to combine. Sprinkle the remaining croutons over the salad, add the tablespoon of nutritional yeast (if using), drizzle with dressing and serve immediately.

### **Find out more**

■ If you're looking for more plant-based recipe inspiration, head over to bosh.tv

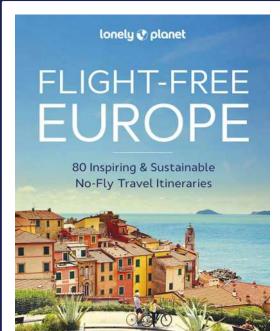


# COMPETITIONS

We've got our hands on a bunch of prizes from fantastic companies that are doing things differently. We love them all and we want to give you a chance to get to know them, too – so we're running these competitions so you can have a go and see for yourself!

We've hand-picked this selection of green pearls – including sustainable travel essentials, natural wellness products, ethical drinks and organic, zero-waste food – to help set you on a path to a lighter lifestyle.

To enter and view any Ts & Cs, visit mygreenpod.com



# WIN

# LONELY PLANET'S FLIGHT-FREE EUROPE

This new guide details 80 hand-picked itineraries for exploring the best of Europe by train, boat or bike. It includes advice on how to approach no-fly, low-carbon travel, tips on train providers and routes, stop-bystop itineraries, carbon footprints, distances and budgets needed.

Deadline for entries: 01.07.24



# WIN

# A BOTTLE OF PURE ORGANIC VODKA

We're giving away a bottle of award-winning, ultra-premium organic vodka that actively supports biodiversity. PURE owes its unique taste to the high-quality raw ingredients, including organic wheat harvested by family farmers who take pride in their healthy soil.

Deadline for entries: 30.06.24





# WIN

# A TRUE VEDA SPORTS BUNDLE

One winner will receive a six-month supply of potent and certified-organic wellness supplements from True Veda.

Deadline for entries: 01.09.24



# A BOTTLE OF RIO-VITALISE CBD OIL (1800MG)

Three readers will receive a bottle of full-spectrum, food-grade CBD oil (1800mg). **Deadline for entries: 01.09.24** 





# WIN

# **DANDY'S RAW CHOC GIFT BOX**

One reader will receive a gift-wrapped box containing all seven flavours of Dandy's Raw Choc - one for each day of the week!

Deadline for entries: 01.09.24



# WIN

# A THREE-**MONTH SUPPLY OF APEAL WORLD ACV**

Apeal World ACV will give two lucky My Green Pod readers a threemonth subscription to its delicious sparkling apple cider vinegar drinks - that's 24 cans every three weeks. Deadline for entries:

01.09.24

WIN

# A £100 VOUCHER **FOR ZERO WASTE BULK FOODS**

One lucky reader will receive a £150 voucher, and two runners-up will get £50 to spend online at Zero Waste Bulk Foods. The vouchers cover everything on the site, from organic cupboard staples and delightfully healthy snacks to indulgent treats - all with zero-waste packaging.

Deadline for entries: 01.09.24



# WIN

# THE OBVS SKINCARE GENTLE DUO

Get your hands on the Organic Intensive Skin Recovery Cream and Organic Moisturiser - Naked.





# MIN

# A MONTH OF ORGANIC **VEG BOXES FROM GOODERY C.I.C.**

We're giving away a month's worth of veg boxes to one reader in Goodery's delivery area (East Anglia). The veg box is a curation of organic vegetables sourced seasonally from East Anglian growers, supplemented with organic produce from elsewhere for a delicious balanced box.

Deadline for entries: 01.09.24

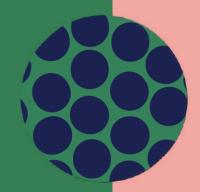
# WIN

# THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL BUNDLE

Award-winning ethical travel product specialist incognito is giving away one of each of its range to help you enjoy a bite-free break. These natural products - including body wash, insect repellent, sunscreen and incense sticks - protect both in and out of the sun, with something for all the family. Effective worldwide and safe for children over six months old.

Deadline for entries: 01.07.24





# P.E.A. AMARDS

# Last call to secure your tickets!

DATE: 25th June 2024



**VENUE:** 

The Savoy, The Strand, London WC2R 0EZ

TIME:

5.30pm VIP Reception (invite only)

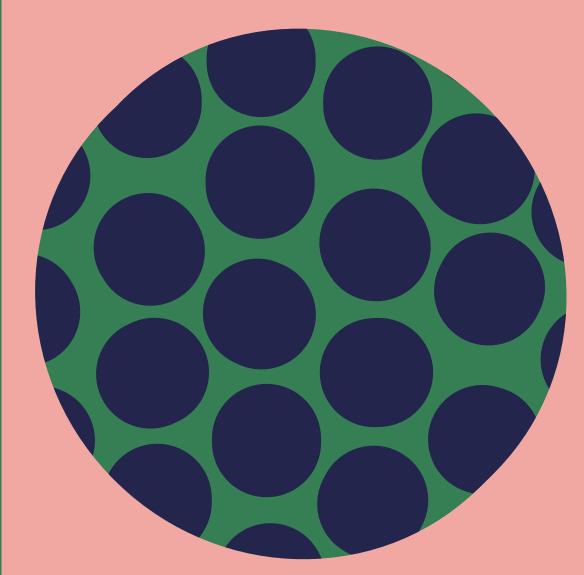
6.30pm Guest Arrival

7.30pm **Awards and Dinner** 

Please note all food will be plant based, any allergies let us know by emailing: hello@mygreenpod.com

**CARRIAGES:** 11.30pm-midnight

**TICKETS:** peaawards.com



**OUR THEME:** Bond 007

**YOUR MISSION:** Dress to Impress

**OUR HOST:** Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall

**Celebrating and honouring the** world's greenest heroes for 15 years!

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