

ENVIRONMENTAL POST

ISSUE 8 - OCTOBER 24

Welcome

Welcome to the latest addition of the Environmental Post, issue 8, our Newsletter dedicated to raising awareness of environmental issues. The topics have been chosen by our steering group members, ranging from current issues to issues that we believe should be highlighted. A quick steering group member update, thank you to our members James Denton, Laura Cox, Shamim Qureshi and Jack Anthony. Your contribution is important to supporting Release Potential's impact on the environment.

Aims and Objectives

During our last Environmental Steering Group meeting we set out our targets for 24/25. Over the course of the year we will be meeting to work towards completing these.

- To continue implementing our environmental practices within everyday work.
- To explore how we can improve the environmental impact when staff work from home.
- To implement new environmental schemes/opportunities within Release Potential.



TOO GOOD TO GO



HOW MUCH FOOD IS WASTED GLOBALLY?

According to WWF (2021), 40% of the food that we produce globally goes to waste. This means that 2.5 billion tonnes of food is wasted every year. This equates to 80,000 kilograms of food being wasted around the world, every single second.

Too Good To Go allows you to find nearby restaurants, cafés, grocery stores and shops with unsold food where you can browse to buy a variety of surprise bags! Prices start from as low as £2, providing an affordable and sustainable way to enjoy quality meals. Confirm your purchase through the app, select a collection time and collect your treats!

The environmental benefits of saving food through Too Good To Go are threefold:

- It ensures that the energy and resources used to produce the food aren't wasted.
- By consuming surplus food, it reduces the need for producing additional food.
- Rescuing food from going to waste prevents it from ending up in landfills or incinerators, avoiding extra emissions.

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to download



Google Play



Apple Store

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ISO 14001:2015 Update

In December 2023 we had our surveillance visit by Alcumus to audit our ISO14001:2015 IMS. Following our re-certification in December 2022, our surveillance visit was a one-day audit to confirm we were still implementing our IMS within Release Potential.

Our surveillance visit was a success and our auditor Simon Giles had some great feedback within his report, some of which I would like to share...

“The infrastructure and environment is suitable for the operations undertaken. There is good training and awareness throughout the business.”

“Conformity with requirements is demonstrated through corrective and preventive action process, this is well managed. Continual improvement is embedded into the Management System and demonstrated at all levels of the business.

“In the auditors honest opinion the management system comes across as a very mature system. Well done”

We are due to have our next audit in December 2024, where we will plan for our next re-certification visit.



Certificate Number : 15294
ISO 14001



Environmental Awareness

November 2024

World Vegan Month - Inspire and support people to try vegan, drive corporate change, and create a global mass movement championing compassionate food choices to protect the planet

National Tree Week - 25th November. This annual event encourages thousands of people in Britain to come together to plant trees, marking the start to tree planting season.

December 2024

World Soil Day - 5th December. This environmental awareness day highlights the importance of the health of our soil and why it is essential for long-term food security.

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Light Pollution

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED HOW WELL YOU CAN SEE THE STARS IN RURAL AREAS, BUT SIGNIFICANTLY LESS IN CITIES?

The reason is light pollution – the process of the night sky being brightened by street lights and man-made sources, causing it to be barely visible in urban areas. Scientists now consider this to be a form of pollution. You may have heard about this phenomenon from astronomers or astro-photographers, who seek out the darkest areas of the world in order to observe the sky in its entirety. But this affects us too, more than we realise – in 1994, after a blackout in Los Angeles, citizens went so far as to call the police concerned about a suspicious looking cloud in the night sky. It was the Milky Way. Due to the excessive light clouding the sky, they had never seen it before.

You may think this issue is only visual, but the real impact of light pollution is much greater than you might expect. Biologically, it has begun affecting our physical health. Research has shown that due to high levels of light pollution in Singapore, people have started to lose their ability to adapt their vision to darkness. Light pollution has also been labelled a significant disruption to our sleep-wake pattern. Due to the presence of artificial light, our bodies are producing less of the hormone melatonin, which allows us to fall asleep naturally. The effects of a poor circadian rhythm are significant; in the short term it can cause insomnia and eye strain or injury, and in the long run it can negatively affect our digestion, blood pressure, mental health and long term sleep habits.

The presence of increasing light pollution in the modern world poses a threat not just to human health, but impacts biodiversity as well. Researchers in Berlin have noted the negative impact of light pollution on the life cycles of corals and turtles, as well as birds and fish. It also impacts our ecosystems by putting predators at an advantage and giving prey fewer places to hide. Studies show that trees have altered budding cycles in cities with increased levels of unnatural light, and there has been a significant decline in insect populations in these areas, which reduces nocturnal pollination.

Overall, light pollution wreaks havoc on our health and our environment. But what can we do about it? From an individual standpoint, we can start by reducing blue light that emits from our devices, and switching to dimmer, warmer tones of light. We can turn on lights only when and where absolutely needed, and use dimmer switches to reduce glare. Outdoors, we can use motion sensors for our lights, and lampshades to direct light towards the ground, instead of horizontally, spreading light unnecessarily and causing disruptions. Though this sounds minor, implementing these measures on a citywide and even global scale will prove incredibly effective. Countries such as France, Spain and Italy have already taken steps to cut down on light pollution by signing caps on light brightness at night into legislation. If we start small, we can improve our health, live on a happier planet, and maybe eventually see the Milky Way from the UK's largest cities.

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Environmental Volunteering

Please find below a list of opportunities available within the North East and West Midlands, where you can support organisations who's mission is to support the environment.

NORTH EAST

Newcastle Wood Recycling CIC - <https://tinyurl.com/y474f7rd>

Northumberland Wildlife Trust - <https://tinyurl.com/y579fhky>

Urban Green - <https://tinyurl.com/bdhpvch2>

Wilder Stoke, Wilder Newcastle - <https://tinyurl.com/yafznemu>

WEST MIDLANDS

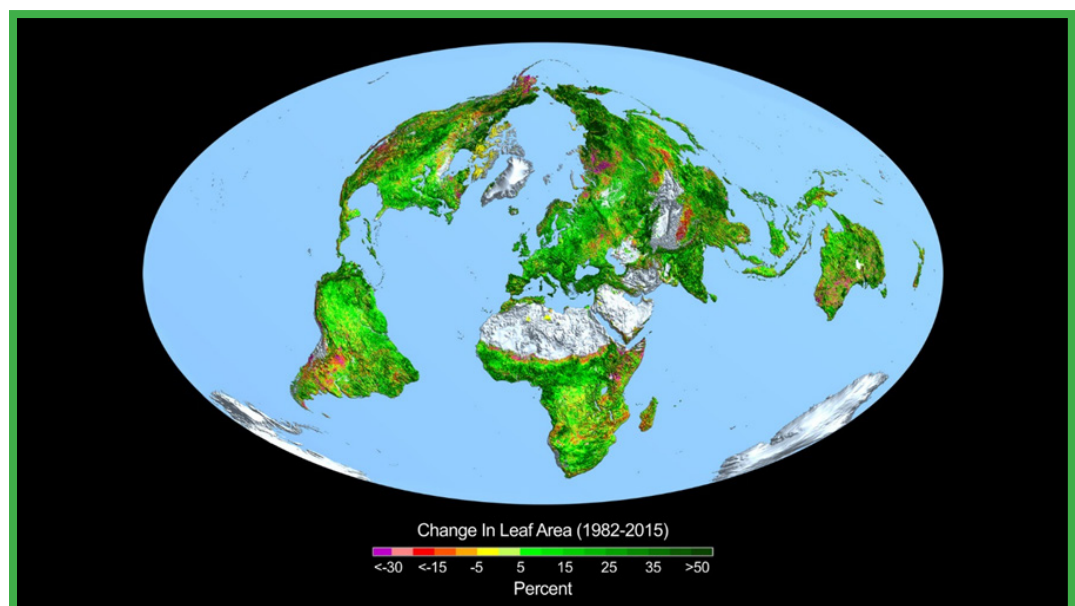
Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust - <https://tinyurl.com/3ztt6yxt>

Birmingham Botanical Gardens - <https://tinyurl.com/yhh36z2a>

Birmingham Council Litter Picker - <https://tinyurl.com/yphfwpku>

Global Greening

An international team of 32 authors from 24 institutions in eight countries led the effort, which involved using satellite data from NASA's Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectrometer and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer instruments to help determine the leaf area index, or amount of leaf cover, over the planet's vegetated regions. The greening represents an increase in leaves on plants and trees equivalent in area to two times the continental United States.



About 85 percent of Earth's ice-free lands is covered by vegetation. The area covered by all the green leaves on Earth is equal to, on average, 32 percent of Earth's total surface area – oceans, lands and permanent ice sheets combined.