



ECO ADVENT

from St Mary's, Iffley

CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

Some green thoughts to kick off Advent,
and help you start your Christmas planning

HOW GREEN IS YOUR TREE?

Living trees with the root ball attached are by far the most sustainable Christmas tree option. Plant it in your garden and decorate it year on year. If you get a freshly cut tree, make sure it is locally grown, and FSC certified – and that you recycle it afterwards. Oxford City Council will collect trees from the kerbside on set days in the new year. Most artificial trees contain PVC and need to be used at least 10 times to keep their environmental impact lower than a real tree*. If you have one of these, look after it and make it last! Or you could go tree-less, and decorate a house plant instead. Whichever option you go for, remember to use LED lights.

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Every Christmas, approximately 54 million platefuls of food are thrown away in the UK*. Before you order your Christmas dinner, plan carefully so that you don't buy more than you need. Shop local, buy loose vegetables and opt for organic – all of which will cut CO2s, reduce plastic and support the soil. And think creatively with those leftovers!

DEALING WITH DECORATIONS

From the table to the tree, the frills of Christmas can be an environmental pitfall! Shop around for plastic-free crackers and recyclable napkins. A good place to start is a charity such as Friends of the Earth, the Woodland Trust or the RSPB. Instead of buying a calendar every year, invest in a reuseable one that you can personalise with your own special gifts – or have a go making your own! Avoid decorations covered in glitter, made of plastic or containing other unrecyclable or unsustainable materials. Why not make some edible treats to hang from the tree, or use off cuts of wool, material and paper to make your own decorations. Rather than buying a shop made plastic wreath, forage for pine cones and holly and create your own.

* The Carbon Trust, *Christmas Tree Disposal Advice*

* OnePoll.com research commissioned by GP Batteries



GIVE A LITTLE...

As an alternative to a traditional Advent calendar – or as a little extra – why not make an Advent food box. Buy an item of food or toiletries every day throughout Advent and put them in a box. You can number the items and decorate the box. To top it off, consider slipping in a present – some chocolate, a pair of gloves, or a small toy. Deliver the box to a local food bank on the 24th. Even if you deliver your box after Christmas, the contents will be greatly appreciated. Remember to include a note as to who the present is suitable for.