

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

No.3

October 2008

The aim of **Christian Stewardship Sustainable Development (CSSD)** is to

- help the church make a prophetic contribution to the promotion of Sustainable Development
- make connections between environmental and sustainability issues and Christian theology

Introduction

Nothing illustrates the connection between consumption and waste better than clothes and textiles.

CSSD is privileged to publish articles by Garth Ward, the former National Recycling Co-ordinator of Salvation Army Trading Co Ltd and his successor, Paul Ozanne. Both remind us of the extent of our consumption, and waste, of clothing. In addition, Ian Woods has written about the Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture enterprise and about the dynamics of the clothes stream processed by the charity shops.

The fourth article in this CSSD describes a project in Barking & Dagenham to collect food waste from households, and process it into compost using “Rocket” in-vessel composters.

Lastly, Jo Rathbone reminds us that the church has a vital role in promoting Christian stewardship and sustainable development, and that local Eco-congregation churches point the way.

In an editorial the co-editors introduce issues that are raised in these articles.

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Co-editors Andrew Craig and Jon Hale write

Next time you buy an article of clothing, or food from the supermarket ...

Just a couple of generations ago, knitting was still a very popular pastime, especially among women. The main reason was that people of limited means could knit themselves and their families good quality garments a lot more cheaply than buying them in a shop. Clothes were intended to last a long time and would most often be passed from child to child. Sometimes, worn-out woollen garments were unpicked and substantially re-knitted into other clothes.

Nowadays, I heard recently, the minority practice of knitting has started to increase again. The reason? No longer is it to save money – you can buy clothes in “value stores” far more cheaply than you can purchase the wool to knit garments, or the cloth to make dresses or shirts. No, the resurgence of interest is in knitting as a therapeutic activity – for relaxation or self expression in creativity. There’s nothing wrong in that, of course, but it does say something about the value of clothes and about personal expression that has some important theological implications.

Consumers

It has become something of a cliché to say that consumption (and having the means to consume) is a modern god. We are valued as consumers by the store chains – even local authorities now regard people who live in their communities as customers (i.e. not, in the first instance, as citizens).

We believe we have rights as consumers; ubiquitous modern marketing techniques treat us as consumers, having our “wants” translated into “needs”; and many politicians tell us that one of our highest “goods” is to have choice over what we consume (schools, health care and utility companies as well as goods).

Contrast the values of the Christian faith in the servant King, which are about relationships – forgiveness and reconciliation – love, community and social justice.

Clothes and textiles

Nothing illustrates the connection between consumption and waste better than clothes and textiles.

CSSD is privileged to publish articles by Garth Ward, the former National Recycling Co-ordinator of Salvation Army Trading Co Ltd and a giant among recycling professionals, and his successor, Paul Ozanne. Both remind us of the extent of our consumption, and waste, of clothing, that has become much more disposable since the advent of cheap clothing and the development of “clothing value stores” from the early 1990s.

In addition, Ian Woods has written about the Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture enterprise. Ian's article, as originally written, led one of CSSD's reviewers to ask about the recycled clothes business, and about impacts on developing country clothing markets. Ian has responded to these questions, and this helps us to understand the dynamics of the clothes stream processed by the charity shops and evaluation of the impact of second hand clothing on developing countries and indeed Eastern Europe.

Debate

There is a debate over whether old clothes should be collected and valorised to raise money for charity, or whether we should support a commercial business carrying out the same activity.

Is what really matters that good quality clothes are made available for poor people who live in Eastern Europe, Africa – or even our own country? Or is this unhelpful competition for charities?

The Association of Charity Shops

This is related to the issue raised by the *Association of Charity Shops* which has lobbied hard with the Government to make mandatory the payment of *Recycling Credits* to charities that collect textiles or unwanted furniture that might otherwise be disposed of to landfill. (*Recycling Credits* are a device that was originally intended to ensure that lower-tier Waste Collection Authorities were given a financial incentive to implement recycling schemes by requiring upper tier Waste Disposal Authorities to pay them the value of avoided landfill charges).

Should *recycling credits* be paid to charities?

The answer, in our opinion, is “not if the recycling activity would have happened anyway” – but this is open to debate.

Should local authorities make donations or payments to charities that recycle? Is the main point of this recycling activity to put unwanted goods into beneficial use, or to provide a means of increasing the revenue for good causes?

We are aware that this may be an over-simplified response to a complex issue, made from a local authority perspective, so we would welcome other views, maybe from charity shops or recycling organisations that depend on recycling credits or consider that it is unjust of local authorities not to pay

If there is a response to this issue, we will it in future editions of *Christian Stewardship Sustainable Development*.

The relationship between local authorities, communities and good causes

Another angle to the relationship between local authorities, communities and good causes is obtained in the case study about a project in Barking & Dagenham to collect food waste from households and process it into compost using “Rocket” in-vessel composters. This has clearly become a community activity, enabling people, in collaboration with local churches, to give practical expression to a more sustainable waste management practice that benefits the environment.

The collections, and operation of the “Rockets”, comes at considerable financial cost and commitment from the hard-pressed local authority - far more than the cost of landfilling the same waste.

Even so, the Council has chosen to put resources into this scheme. The non-quantifiable benefits to the local community include the ‘social policing’ role of the food waste collectors and the educational value of the food waste recycling scheme in a Borough that has a low recycling / composting rate. The Government’s fiscal pressures on waste authorities to divert waste from landfill are increasingly concentrating the minds of waste managers, and a significant investment in new waste treatment capacity (combined heat and power municipal waste incinerators and other biological and mechanical waste treatment processes) must be made. But waste authorities are also following another, equally important, agenda of public education, to achieve overall reduction in waste generation and to achieve householders’ behaviour-

change in attitudes to waste. Householders who are actively managing their own household waste, and who are well-informed about waste issues, are less likely to object to a planning application for a new waste plant.

Next time you buy an article of clothing, or food from the supermarket

Next time you buy an article of clothing, or food, from the supermarket, reflect on its value – not as goods that you can consume, but as endeavour, care, skill and work that someone elsewhere in the World has put into making or growing, often for scant financial reward. Reflect on the meaning of the communities where these things have been created and where they are to be consumed and on God’s Kingdom. Does that not change the meaning of waste for you?

Thanks also to Jo Rathbone for her contribution. The church has a vital role to play in promoting Christian stewardship and sustainable development, and local Eco-congregation churches point the way.

Andrew Craig

After 12 years as an industrial materials scientist, Andrew Craig started working as a local authority recycling officer in the early 1990s, and as waste management development officer for the Tees Valley local authorities from 2000. His portfolio of responsibilities in the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit now includes climate change and energy policy. He is policy officer of the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) and a waste adviser to the Local Government Association. Ordained in 2003 and 2004, he is licensed to All Saint's Church, Stranton, Hartlepool where he operates as a Minister in Secular Employment.

Jon Hale

Jon is a Church of England clergyman in full time post as Vicar of All Saints', Crawley Down in West Sussex. He has a professional background in waste and minerals planning, and he's picked up a bit of waste management along the way. He is a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and an Affiliate Member of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management. In the Autumn of 2007 he did research into Opportunities for the Church to Promote Sustainable Waste Management in England, and you can read the outcome on the website that Jon runs: www.earthresources.org.uk. Jon has a particular interest in encouraging the church to work with local government and waste companies in promoting sustainable waste management.

Should we return to wearing Woad?

Garth D Ward FIMLS writes

Anecdotal history tells us that our ancestors painted their bodies with woad. Julius Caesar tells us (in *de Bello Gallico*) that the Britanni used to mark their bodies with *vitrum*; this has often been assumed to mean that they painted or tattooed themselves with woad. However *vitrum* does not translate to "woad", but probably more likely refers to a type of blue-green glass which was common at the time. The Picts may have received their name (Latin *Picti* which means *painted folk* or possibly *tattooed folk*) from their practice of going into battle naked except for body paint or tattoos. However, more recent research has cast serious doubt on the assumption that woad was the material the Picts used for body decoration.

However, this humorous song partially remembered from my youth, written by William Hope-Jones, a housemaster at Eton, and sung to the tune Men of Harlech, provides reasons why woad would perhaps be a most useful and sustainable item in our wardrobe!!

What's the use of wearing braces?	Romans came across the channel
Vests and pants and boots with laces?	All dressed up in tin and flannel
Spats and hats you buy in places	Half a pint of woad per man'll
Down on Brompton Road?	Dress us more than these.
What's the use of shirts of cotton?	Saxons you can waste your stitches
Studs that always get forgotten?	Building beds for bugs in britches
These affairs are simply rotten,	We have woad to clothe us which is
Better far is woad.	Not a nest for fleas
Woad's the stuff to show men.	Romans keep your armours.
Woad to scare your foemen.	Saxons your pyjamas.
Boil it to a brilliant hue	Hairy coats were made for goats,
And rub it on your back and your abdomen.	Gorillas, yaks, retriever dogs and llamas.
Ancient Briton ne'er did hit on	Tramp up Snowdon with your woad on,
Anything as good as woad to fit on	Never mind if you get rained or blown on
Neck or knees or where you sit on.	Never want a button sewed on.
Tailors you be blowned!!	Go it Ancient Bs!!

Being a little more serious let's look at some issues of which we, as Christians, should be aware, especially so far as our clothes are concerned.

Insurance

A couple of years ago, in the aftermath of the hurricanes in Haiti and Florida, there was a discussion on the radio concerning insurance. In the past, natural environmental disasters have been termed 'acts of God' and the insurers have not paid out as a result. However, one of the debaters presented a case that these environmental phenomena are less likely these days to be 'acts of God' but 'acts against God' on the basis that human behaviour knowingly destroys the earth's habitat and climate such that these large scale climatic changes are now more influenced by man than God.

Quite a thought isn't it! Our current behaviour is causing major long term environmental change. One element of this behaviour is in the way we use earth's natural resources which leave a lasting environmental impact. As a nation we have become a market driven materialistic society. Our demand for goods is high and not many of us can understand the complexities of the supply chain. Is it any wonder that as a result people are not

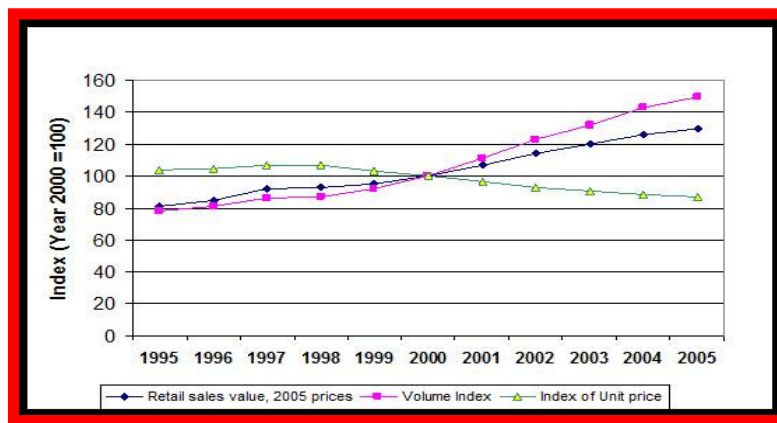
generally aware of the impact of their desires, many of which are created by "what's in fashion" together with their affluence?

Consumer affluence, single households and disposable income

Some recent research (Defra Waste R&D Project: Impact of lifestyle trends on Waste Composition) made a number of very interesting predictions for the next 10 years. Just focusing on clothing they believe there will be an astronomical 90% growth!

The drivers for this are the fact that consumer affluence is growing at 2.3% per annum, and single households are on the increase. They also noted that as our disposable income grows so does our waste! These are sobering thoughts especially as What's in Fashion + Affluence is the origin of our waste mountain.

In the 1990's we saw the introduction of the clothing value store. Their objective was a fast turn around of stylish clothes at low prices. Just look at the effect they had on the UK fashion market.



The green line shows how the unit prices of new clothing have declined substantially between 1998 and 2005 as cheap imports and the value retailers have come into the market. However, volumes (the magenta line) - as measured by value of sales adjusted by RPI - have increased by some 60% in the same period, due to a combination of lower prices and increasing affluence. Finally the blue line confirms the other 2, that the consumer is buying more clothes but at lower prices.

They have changed our lifestyle; in other words they have turned need into want and fortunately or unfortunately – depending on

your view point - within the UK, many, if not most, people have sufficient disposable income to accede to these demands. The value stores have compressed the time it takes for clothing to travel from catwalk to shop rails. Stores are accepting shipments of the latest styles several times a week and selling them just as quickly. These pieces of clothing are sold at such affordable prices that consumers don't think twice about wearing them only a handful of times before relegating them to the backs of their wardrobes – or worse, throwing them away. **Of course to achieve these prices, quality, durability and often ethics have been sacrificed.**

The amount of clothing we buy annually in the UK

Apparent UK Consumption of Textiles and Footwear in 2003	,000 Tonnes
Men's	505
Women's	676
Household	462
Shoes	169
Used imports	12
Charity Shops	41
Total	1,865

This table shows the astronomical amount of clothing we buy annually in the UK. It's worth a staggering £35 billion. The value stores account for about 25% of this. The figures also show that it is not only women who buy a lot of clothes today. The social scene is

changing. When they were introduced the "value" stores were the domain of the less well off, but perhaps this, too, is becoming a thing of the past. I remember my grandparents had one set of working clothes and another set for best.

My parents after the war followed the trend but increased the size of their wardrobe as their affluence grew. My wife... well enough said, I'll only end up in hot water if I explore that avenue. But suffice it to say that quality was still a priority and so her clothes tended to last. Finally, my daughter – the disposable society has indeed been born.

These stores have changed their customer profile, too. Originally the less well off used them as a means of eking out small budgets whilst looking fashionable. Today, things have changed. An article in the Guardian reported an interview with an apparently reasonably affluent lady coming out laden with bags from a value store. "Do you usually shop here?" "No, I was browsing." "Did you buy anything?" "Yes, a hand bag" "You seem to have a lot of bags for just a hand bag" "Yes but I bought 9, 1 in each colour, they're only £3 each and you never know when one will come in handy!" Hmmm!

Moving to the waste issue and using Government figures we have calculated that society throws away over a million tonnes of clothing and textiles into their rubbish bins every year! Put in a much more memorable way each of us buys about £600 of clothes every year and throws £400 away! It just doesn't make sense.

Happily Government has realised that clothing and textiles are a high impact product category. Indeed within the EU-25, clothing and textiles account for approximately 5-10 per

cent of our environmental impacts. Without intervention and with growing consumption, these impacts are likely to increase; and so Defra is developing a Clothing Roadmap that will play an important role in capturing and highlighting current good practice and catalysing further work by a wide majority of stakeholders.

In addition TV programmes, like the BBC Panorama (23 June 2008), are bringing home to us that we should be thinking and questioning like this: *Why am I only paying £4 for a hand embroidered top? This item looks handmade! Who made it for such little cost? Is this top stained with a child's suffering and sweat?* This, too, will mean we change our approach to fashion if we are not too desensitized and selfish.

Care must be taken to understand what some of our terms mean. Just because cotton is organic does not mean that it is grown in a sustainable manner. Obviously it cuts down on pesticides and other man made chemicals but cotton, organic or otherwise, takes large amounts of water which in many instances could be used for growing food. Fair-trade really means that the farmer receives a fair price, but it does not mean that the farmer, producer is using sustainable technologies.

Of course it is essential and right that we question and lobby for better conditions for workers in other lands, but before we take action we must ensure that we understand the consequences of these actions.

Perhaps so far as sustainability is concerned there are no *good* answers, just *less bad*! A balance needs to be struck between the Social, Environmental and Economic elements of our society. To bring this about we need to understand more, we need to be aware of the needs of others. Within our every day Christian life there are always choices. Some are easy, some require sacrifice and are less easy to make. At these difficult times remember our Lord gave His life for you and me!

In closing I would ask you to consider these words of Leo Tolstoy: - *"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.* Then couple them with Paul's words to the Colossians (3; 9) as found in The Message paraphrase: - *"You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting*

clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it. All the old fashions are now obsolete. Words like Jewish and non-Jewish, religious and irreligious, insider and outsider, uncivilized and uncouth, slave and free, mean nothing. From now on everyone is defined by Christ, everyone is included in Christ."

To learn more about textile recycling and it's consequences and perhaps read some questions – you will need to supply the answers - please refer to my web site: - www.aestiva.co.uk.

God bless you

Garth D Ward. FIMLS.



Garth Ward has come to the formal end of an exciting, fulfilled career. This has been enjoyed in three distinct professional phases.

The first episode was working in the Pathology Departments of two National Health Service Hospitals. He worked during the day diagnosing diseases and their treatments whilst studying at night school to obtain a Fellowship in Medical Laboratory Science in Haematology and Medical Microbiology.

Garth then moved into the "commercial" field with the then leading medical diagnostic company as a salesmen, progressing to Marketing Manager. For the final part of this second interlude he was head-hunted to be a Managing Director leading a group of scientists to develop diagnostic tests for diseases in fish, plants and animals.

His final and most fulfilling position was with Salvation Army Trading Co Ltd. melding the earlier learned skills and using them to help develop a social, environmental textile collection company whose profits contribute to the second part of The Salvation Army's mission "...to help people in need without discrimination."

In retirement his main happiness is travelling with his wife Christine and spending time with their 8 children and 12 grandchildren!

However, to keep his brain cells active he has set up Aestiva Ltd., a consultancy company that enables him to work with University researchers on novel projects to promote cradle to cradle precepts into clothing and fashion as well as working with The Salvation Army's European Network on Recycling.

Why is recycling important?

Paul Ozanne



Paul Ozanne (on the right in the photograph above) was born in London in 1947, being the 6th child of Salvation Army ministers, Brigadier and Mrs Ozanne as a 3rd generation Salvationist. He has been a life long Salvationist, and enthusiastic Bass Trombone player. He has been married to Liz for nearly 40 years and has two children. His main joy is 3 grand children and another on the way.

A Banker by profession Paul achieved management in the High Street Retail Branch Bank. A career enjoyed for over 20 years until the urge to broaden his horizons saw a change to the Corporate Life and Pensions market. Subsequently Paul became the Salvation Army's first non ordained Divisional Director of Public a role he relished for 10 years until he was devastated, but not deterred, by redundancy.

Paul secured work with a local community charity in Southampton setting up PR Marketing and fundraising systems before working with the Children Society. Thinking this would see him through to retirement, he was surprised when approached by the Salvation Army trading Company to be their National Recycling Coordinator. After receiving the necessary approval from his wife Liz he quickly jumped at this opportunity to work for the organisation he loves being able to demonstrate his passion for those in need in a real and practical way. The considerable funds raised by the scheme are used in the UK by the Salvation Army to help people in need.

Paul Ozanne writes

According to the Government's Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), textiles are one of the fastest growing household waste streams, yet it is often overlooked in favour of more popular items such as glass and paper. It is therefore not surprising that the public is being urged to make clothes their 'thing' and have a sort out. However, instead of putting clothes and shoes in to household rubbish, we suggest that you take them to your nearest clothing bank.

A Defra report published in 2006 (based on data from 2003) shows that, as a nation, we buy 1,865,000 tonnes of new clothes each year; estimated to be valued at £34 million pounds. Yet we throw away 1,165,000 (63%) of unwanted clothes that end up in landfill. This means that on average, each of us in the United Kingdom buys £600 of clothes each year and throws £400 worth into the waste bin.

These clothes are a valuable resource, and recycling clothes and shoes would significantly reduce the carbon footprint. If you think that it takes 800 litres of water just to make 1 t-shirt think of how much water we could save and the energy used in production by recycling clothes

So recycling clothing saves raw materials, energy, and water and diverts waste from landfill. Cast off clothing can be worn by someone else in need. Collecting unwanted quality clothes therefore both protects the environment and, for instance, helps the Salvation Army to serve suffering humanity. Many people in other countries rely on the clothing collection scheme to provide clothing at a price they can afford. Additionally funds generated by the Salvation Army Clothing collections are used by The Salvation Army to help people in need.

From a Christian viewpoint it appears to me that protecting the environment whilst helping suffering humanity is indeed belief in action.

Paul Ozanne

National Recycling Coordinator, Salvation Army Trading Association.

Mobile 07887726410

Email paul.ozanne@satradingco.org

Unlocking the value of unwanted textiles and understanding the wider picture

Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture is a business enterprise working in the community with schools and others to help us all recycle our unwanted clothes and other textiles. Ian's brief article for Christian Stewardship Sustainable Development is printed below.

This led one of CSSD's reviewers to ask some questions of Ian, and these questions follow Ian's article.

Ian then responds to these questions, and this all helps to build a picture of the complexity of the textiles recycling and second hand clothing markets. Ian describes the charitable fund-raising ethos of Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture, and recent research on the impact of the second hand clothing trade on developing countries.

Ian Woods writes

“You bought it – now what are you are you going to do with it?”

This challenging statement emanated from a recent waste awareness conference in Scotland where by 2010, local authorities have been set a target of zero waste growth.

It is clear that Councils and their waste management teams cannot be the sole answer to solving the waste challenge – the public has a responsibility and people must be educated to consider the waste journey our life style choices initiate.

To the heart of our convictions

As Christians the challenge goes to the heart of our convictions – in Genesis we are commanded to take care of the earth.

Canon Williams preached a sermon at Bradford Cathedral in 2007 and posed this question

“So with all this in mind, as someone who claims to take God seriously I am obliged to ask myself, what am I doing to take care of the earth and all it produces?”

Part of the answer lies in recognising that there is no other option but change – we are all living beyond our environmental means and we must rein the balance back. There is a huge cultural change to implement and we must follow the mantra of the three 'R's – **REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE**

Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture

At **Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture** we have been working for the past 10 years in helping to divert unwanted textiles away from landfill and at the same time unlocking the value of this reuse resource to help people fundraise for a myriad of causes.

DEFRA now recognise that textiles are fast becoming the UK's largest waste stream due to the fact that modern fashion has led to shorter shelf life with clothes no longer in fashion being quickly discarded and relocated to the back of the wardrobe. The second hand clothing market has clear benefits to consumers in the developing world and

supports the livelihoods of thousands of people.

As Christians we are called to make a difference – that's why our two little bags are smiling because that is what they are helping to do. Together, these bags can help redress the world's problems by re-dressing the world.

Ian Woods



Bag2School/Bag2TheFuture, 6 -7 Omega Business Village, Thurston Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 2NJ. Tel 01609 780222, www.bag2school.com

Jon Hale writes

Ian Woods' article led one of CSSD's reviewers to ask some questions of Ian. I put these questions into the three paragraphs below and sent them to Ian.

"I'm wondering if Ian's article only gives us one side of the story. Isn't it true that some people are now making a lot of money in this business, when traditionally recycling clothes for use by others has been associated with fund raising for charitable purposes here in the UK? Giving unwanted clothes to local charity shops reduces transport costs, because the clothes are sorted and sold in the shop, and so significantly less is then put into the international market. But **Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture** is a business enterprise dependent entirely on transporting clothes abroad.

Although Ian does say that Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture is a business, it could undermine the fund-raising revenue of UK charities and also undermine people's willingness to participate in such schemes, if it is not clearly stated this is a business enterprise and not a charitable venture. People could think that it is a charitable venture, discover it isn't, and then be disillusioned.

Ian's article makes no mention of the impact that Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture's clothes recycling has on developing country clothing markets. Does it not impact badly in areas dependent on clothing manufacture which use local skills and local raw materials? Is there not a danger that this ties poorer countries into a global system? Doesn't it mean that we get to the situation that clothing is travelling maybe twice or even three times around the world: raw materials transported to cloth manufacture in Africa/India; to tailoring in factories (SE Asia); to Europe/US for purchase and then back to Africa/Asia - via Eastern Europe, apparently - for 'recycling'?"

Ian Woods writes in response.....

There is a widespread misunderstanding about the dynamics of the clothes stream processed by the charity shops. The shops receive their clothes via direct donations to the shop, textile banks and door to door collections. Only 10-20% of these textiles are actually sold in the UK. In order to clear shops of bulky, unwanted clothing, the remaining lower quality garments are sold by weight to the reclamation industry.

The only “sorting” carried out by the shops is to remove what is generally referred to as the “cream” items (nearly new, high quality clothing). A true sorting (or grading) operation is carried out in a factory environment where the materials are unloaded on to a conveyor system that moves the product through the factory in front of a team of operators who sort the textiles for their material content (1).

The **Bag2School/Bag2TheFuture** collection scheme is closely associated with fundraising: organisations that arrange a clothes collection with our company receive a payment direct to the charity or cause they are supporting based on the weight of clothes donated which is currently £300 per tonne (rising to £400 in '09).

Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture is a business and this is clearly stated in our literature and on our website. We are proud of the fact that approximately 75% of the profits raised go directly to the organisation who arranged the clothes collection. This figure stands up well against the charity shop sector. It also has to be recognised that many major charities now have organisational structures which in essence place them on a par with major businesses.

The issue of the impact of second hand clothing on developing countries and indeed

Eastern Europe has been extensively evaluated. The second hand clothing trade has positive social, economic and environmental impacts in exporting and receiving countries. In the UK alone up to 10,000 people are employed in the textile reclamation business and worldwide the figure is 1.5 million people (2).

Two important pieces of research endorsed the positive impact the second hand clothing trade has on Sub-Saharan African countries: The impact of the second-hand clothing trade on developing countries written by Sally Baden and Catherine Barber and commissioned by Oxfam, and The beneficial nature of the second-hand clothing trade in Sub-Saharan Africa put together by Dr Simone Field. Dr Field's research noted that the availability of “second-hand clothing allowed very poor people to clothe themselves and their families who (in the absence of the trade) could not afford to buy any clothing at all”. Dr Field also raised the importance of ancillary employment brought about by the second-hand clothes trade, namely repairing and ironing (value in the market system is increased by contracting people to improve the appearance of good quality clothes and hanging the garments on display rails); bag making (for traders to transport clothing to sell in rural areas); security and manual bale carriers. At a time when many developing world economies are not capable of providing substitute jobs for the unemployed, the second hand clothes trade is soaking up labour and offering relatively lucrative returns, as well as providing affordable clothing to the mass of the population.

Notes

- 1) Garth Ward, reviewing this article said: 'This operation is in significant decline, mainly due to economics. Unsorted items tend to be exported to Eastern Europe where sorting costs are much lower. However, this helps to create paid employment in these countries and also makes a huge positive contribution to Europe's Carbon Footprint'.
- 2) Garth Ward, reviewing this article said: 'I think this figure of 10,000 is somewhat exaggerated, unless it includes volunteers who naturally are not paid'.

Ian Woods is the Business Development Manager for Bag2School / Bag2TheFuture, a business which specialises in free fundraising. Prior to his current position, Ian spent over 30 years in the aluminium industry in sales and branch management. Married to a doctor, Ian has two teenage daughters and he lives in a village on the outskirts of Northallerton, North Yorkshire. Ian attends New Life Baptist Church in Northallerton and runs the drama group as well as being the church press officer.



Ian Woods

A Vicar's innovative community food waste recycling scheme

Jon Hale writes

The Reverend Roger Gayler is Vicar of St.Mark's Church of England Parish Church in Marks Gate, Chadwell Heath. Chadwell Heath lies in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and the Diocese of Chelmsford. I met Roger in September 2007 to see the innovative food waste recycling scheme that is being run in Marks Gate by East London Community Recycling Partnership.

In April this year I heard from Roger that the funding for the scheme was likely to end, but as things now stand (September) the scheme is being funded by Barking and Dagenham Council and will continue.

Marks Gate Local Agenda 21 Group

The initiative for the scheme came from the Marks Gate Local Agenda 21 group, the Chairman of which is Roger Gayler.

Local Agenda 21 (known as LA21) is a UK-wide movement that was established in the 1990s. It was founded to inspire local communities to make themselves more 'sustainable' for the 21st Century. Local initiatives were encouraged.

In 2005 the Marks Gate LA21 group began working with the Borough Council and East London Community Recycling Partnership to establish a food waste recycling scheme. The East London Community Recycling Partnership specialises in food waste

processing and green waste composting. The disposal of food waste in a landfill is a significant cause of putrefaction, which gives rise to emissions of landfill gas, including methane which has a significant effect as 'greenhouse gases'. The recycling scheme turns the food waste into compost and so diverts it from landfill.

The scheme began operation in 2006. Members of the LA21 group include members of St.Mark's Church, Marks Gate Baptist Church and other churches in the locality.

So this innovative community food waste scheme is underpinned by Christian witness and prayer.

About food waste

At present many councils are introducing Alternate Weekly Collections of household waste: recyclables to be collected on alternate weeks, and landfill waste to be collected on the other alternate weeks.

This presents two practical issues that concentrate the minds of waste managers – and local churches that want to get involved in promoting sustainable waste management.

1. Separate collections of food waste

With Alternate Weekly Collections, a major issue for some householders is that food waste will lie in their landfill bins for up to two weeks before being collected.

In March this year Defra announced the result of research that had recently been undertaken on its behalf into Enhancing participation in kitchen waste collection schemes – household behaviour and motivations.

The conclusion is that two thirds of households recycle their food waste when councils provide a weekly food waste collection alongside fortnightly residual waste collection.

This research highlights a number of key findings:

- widespread support for separate food waste collection – 78% agree the environmental benefits are important to them; only 1 in 10 households don't see the point;
- two in three households (65%) use their food collection regularly, but 23% have never tried it;
- dedicated food-only systems capture more food waste than food waste mixed with garden waste. Overall, weekly food combined with fortnightly

residual waste collection generates the highest kilogramme amount of food recovery per household;

- people take part because they think waste is bad and like to do their bit for the environment;
- people who don't do it tend to be the 'bad' recyclers and can be seen by others as letting everyone else down.

During the summer this year, Defra has arranged for nineteen trial separate collections of food waste to be operated by various councils throughout England. The purpose is to develop good practice guidance in the design and operation of food waste collection schemes, and the results should be known soon.

The Marks Gate food waste scheme was not one of these Defra trials, but it is good news that Barking and Dagenham Council are continuing to fund the scheme, which, surely, provides experience and expertise for the Council and others to learn from.

Source:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2008/080327c.htm>

2. Householders' limited ability to store recyclables and run garden compost heaps

A second issue concerns the limited ability of householders who live in apartments and flats to store food waste and run garden compost heaps.

These are recognised as contributory factors to the relatively low recycling rates of urban

areas, such as the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham which had a household waste recycling & composting rate in 2005/06 of only 10%. The comparative national target for the whole of the UK is to recycle or compost at least 25% by 2005, and at least 30% by 2010, so Barking & Dagenham is struggling.

The Marks Gate LA21 Group realised that the inability of many residents to run compost heaps hindered the achievement of higher rates of recycling in their Borough, and that they could help solve this by promoting the food waste scheme.

The collection of household waste and recyclables in the Borough is still done on a weekly basis: no Alternate Weekly Collections in Barking & Dagenham. This means that there is no incentive in the community food waste scheme to avoid concerns about food waste lingering in waste bins for a fortnight. But if the food waste scheme was not there, food waste from flats in Marks Gate would

almost certainly be disposed of by householders with their landfill waste.

It is good news that the Council is keeping the funding going for the food waste scheme. Roger Gayler tells me that this is in the context of the Council now trialling schemes in some areas for separate bins and boxes for different kinds of recyclables, but there has been a problem with this, in that there is lack of storage space in front of flats and it is difficult for some people to move their bins and boxes into and through their homes. These are all part of the challenge of increasing recycling rates in urban areas.

The food waste recycling scheme in action

The components of the scheme are:

- **Food recycling bins** are issued to all households in Marks Gate that are apartments or flats. There is a total of about 1200 such households.
- **'Bokashi' powder**, given to householders to add to the food waste to prevent putrefaction of the waste in the food recycling bins. 'Bokashi' powder is a mixture of Bran, Molasses and a special ingredient called Effective Microbes (Ems). It is advertised for use as part of a composting system in which Bokashi powder is added to food waste to encourage composting. If used for a short period, Bokashi powder prevents putrefaction. For more on Bokashi go to <http://www.bokashibucket.co.uk/>
- **The installation of two 'Rocket' food waste processors** in five former lock-up

garages in the centre of Marks Gate, and the operation of the two 'Rockets' to produce compostable material. For more on Rockets go to:
<http://www.quickcompost.co.uk/>

- **The employment of two food waste collectors** who collect food waste left in food recycling bins on householders' doorsteps. Their presence has the additional beneficial 'social policing' effect of providing a constant presence of uniformed staff in the community.
- **The employment of a project manager.**

- **The transfer of compostable material** from the 'Rockets' to a disused allotment site that the community hoped to reclaim as allotments working with Wellgate Community Farm, where this material is added to compost heaps which produce compost. The finished compost is made available free of charge to all residents.

In September 2007 funding for the scheme was coming from Barking & Dagenham Borough Council and the Big Lottery Fund's Community Recycling and

Economic Development (CRED) Programme. This funding was only in place until January 2008, but funding is now being provided by the Borough Council. Roger Gayler tells me that the Council will maintain the food waste scheme and that its future will be decided when the current trials of separate bins and boxes for different kinds of recyclables are evaluated by the Council. We may assume that the Council will also take account of what is being learned from the nineteen Defra trials described above.

Reflections on the community food waste scheme

Roger Gayler has been the inspiration and driving force for this innovative project: an urban parish is now able to recycle its food waste, thus reducing the amount going to landfill, reducing global warming, and, at the same time, giving the local community a focus that is of benefit to all.

In his page on the London Leaders website, Roger says:

"For me, sustainability is part of my faith and permeates the way I live my life and the way I work. God gives creation and we are here to care for it, it's as simple as that. Creation includes planet and people. It's justice, care and love rolled into one".

He says:

"I think there has been a recent change in thinking about sustainability in Barking stimulated by the large scale regeneration in the area. People are beginning to recognise the need to think about sustainable development if we are going to respond to the community needs in the borough and help to tackle climate change."

"My commitment as a London Leader is to engage the Marks Gate community on sustainability issues and encourage other churches to get on board, share experiences and provide leadership. There is an appetite for change, and sustainability provides the scope for new ideas and approaches."

Websites:

The Revd Roger Gayler and Marks Gate Local Agenda 21 Group on London Leaders:

<http://www.londonsdc.org/londonleaders/profile.aspx?ID=4>

East London Community Recycling Partnership: <http://www.elcrp-recycling.com/>

Barking & Dagenham Borough Council: <http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/>

Surge in Eco-congregation Awards!

Jo Rathbone writes

In 2008, there have been at least 28 Awards given to churches so far (up to the beginning of September) which I'm hoping is marking a significant rise in churches getting their act together on the environment.

Churches from Bramhall to Barking and Shrewsbury to Sheffield have been taking the challenge to green up across the spectrum of church life: worship, practical things, and engagement with their local or global communities.

There have been so many Awards that I didn't order enough plaques and have had to send off to Scotland for more (the plaques are made from fallen oak in Scotland). Some of these awards are the 3rd in a row for churches. Once churches have done the things which first spring to mind, they have to really take on the environmental challenge. Often that means taking seriously how to take a lead in

the local community. After all, the major changes that need to occur are in the hearts and minds (and consequently lifestyles will follow) of those who don't come to church, as well as those who do.

For example, Evesham Methodist Church has just received its third Award, and in the process initiated the first Transition Towns meeting in Evesham. Part of the church's role could be a facilitating one to enable the whole community to begin to develop alternative structures for local production of food, local transport, sustainable buildings, energy efficiency, local energy generation... and in the process rebuild strong, resilient communities.

For more on how to bring together the twin issues of climate change and peak oil, and positive inspirational responses, have a look at <http://transitionculture.org>

Jo Rathbone

Jo runs the Eco-congregation programme in England & Wales, part-time. She lives with her husband and two girls in Coventry, cycling out to the office on the Royal Showground. Jo is also involved with Christian Ecology Link and the Anabaptist Network, and has a passion for caring for the environment as this is better for the planet, and enables a lifestyle which has justice for people at its heart, too.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The co-editors of **CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** are the Revd Dr Andrew Craig and the Revd Jon Hale.

The reviewers of this edition of **CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** were Garth Ward, Andrew Craig and Jon Hale.

Please email either of the co-editors if you would like to contribute an article to **CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**. The co-editors reserve the right to decide the content of **CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**. The next edition of **CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** will be published in January 2009. Please send any material for consideration for inclusion in the January edition to either of the co-editors by 7th December. All feedback welcomed!

Andrew Craig: Andrew.Craig@teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk **Jon Hale:** aj@jkcahale.co.uk