



»»» ECO NEWSLETTER «««



»»» READ MORE

I've tried to get my family to scale back on Christmas gifts. Now branded as the family scrooge they won't sign up to my 'no adult' policy. Mum witheringly said 'you used to like Christmas' as if my reluctance to buy unnecessary gifts has cast me as a real life Grinch. And for the record I love Christmas.

SPLURGE! IT'S CHRISTMAS.

By Andrew Morris

I JUST DON'T THINK PRESENT GIVING SHOULD BE THE MAIN THRUST OF CHRISTMAS, AN INDULGENT LUXURY AND NOT WHAT ADVENT IS ALL ABOUT.

To have a more sustainable Christmas may mean cutting back in some areas, reducing spend and wasting less but what if it means being more generous in others? Being abundant with your Christian spirit could have a much stronger impact than a Lynx gift set from Boots.

So this Christmas perhaps do something nice for your neighbour who you normally avoid. Try spending a little more time with your family who perhaps you have previously short-changed. Remember food banks and charities collecting for those less fortunate and dig deep. Call someone you have lost touch with. Join in with Christmas events, church services and spread joy by just being with others.



But if like my family you can't scale back think about what you buy and before you buy that fluffy, novelty Oodie ask yourself 'will they really want this or can I display my love in other ways?'

And once again Mum, I love Christmas.

➤➤➤ CHARITY DONATIONS

Following on from Andrew's article we are blessed to be living in a generous community who support our local charities. Clothes and bedding for Crawley Open House and Refugees. Food, toiletries and household supplies regularly donated to EG Foodbank and FSW. Thank you.

THIS MONTH FSW HAS LAUNCHED ITS APPEAL TO HELP THOSE LIVING IN FUEL POVERTY. (53,000 HOUSEHOLDS IN SUSSEX). GO TO THE WEBSITE AND SEE THE POSTER OR PICK UP A CARD AT THE BACK OF CHURCH IF YOU CAN DONATE. FSW ALSO SUPPLIES CHRISTMAS HAMPERS THANKS TO DONATIONS.

by Karen W

➤➤➤ THE LORD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER.

I see the difference it makes first hand and know that your donations are needed, welcomed and used wisely.

For many families we are entering the time of year to celebrate and enjoy a warm living environment. But sadly some will have to make the decision to heat or eat.

FSW and the Foodbank rely heavily on donations to support families in crisis to make life a little easier.

At EG Foodbank
250 school
referrals will
receive a festive
pack to help ease
the holiday period
for families

Do sign up for the Bank the Food App to see real time Food needs especially if you make regular donations at the supermarket.

(see poster in Church porch).

Help with fuel bills is also available plus access to CAB and CAP during some sessions for Foodbank clients in a calm and mostly prayerful setting.



I'm a bit of a grinch too Andrew! Choosing not to spend on material things but gift my family National Trust membership which allows us all to enjoy the natural beauty of our countryside and learn about the history of the properties. Maybe make a visit to a local pantomime.

Memories made together last longer, are meaningful, and are far more precious!!

If you are too, here are 7 ways to reduce your carbon footprint this Christmas.



1. **Buy local food:** local farm shops and butchers generally have much lower food miles than supermarkets and often fewer pesticides are used.
2. **And gifts:** a staggering 4,000 tonnes of products are sent by container from China every Christmas. Try local suppliers and makers, or companies who will say if the seller is based in the UK, such as Etsy and Not on the High Street.
3. **Give an experience day:** Memories will last longer than physical gifts. From days out to tea for two or support the arts with theatre tickets, or a local artists work.
4. **Make your own:** use your own special talent to make a gift that will not be forgotten. Knit, crochet, bake or use your woodwork talents. Use websites that have tested recipes such as BBC Good Food and Good Housekeeping.
5. **Buy sustainable or fair-trade items:** look for the labels and help others while you shop.
6. **Subscription or membership:** Local attractions such as Hever or Wakehurst or further afield such as Woodland Trust, National Trust, RHS. Magazines or monthly treats. This will help the charity as well as providing a year long adventure for your loved one.
7. **Buy gifts without plugs:** Books and toys that don't plug in or have batteries have a lower carbon footprint than the those that do.

**SO, DON'T JUST DREAM OF A
GREEN CHRISTMAS, HELP IT TO
BECOME
THE NEW NORMAL.**

by Julie Orten



VEGAN WELLINGTON

Prep: 45 mins Cook: 1 hr and 15 mins plus cooling and chilling

Easy recipe: Serves 6

By Julie Orton

4

▶▶▶ INGREDIENTS

- 90g dried porcini mushrooms
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 250g chestnut mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 500g sweet potatoes (about 2 large), peeled and cut into 2cm chunks
- 1 tbsp finely chopped rosemary
- 1 tbsp finely chopped sage, plus 4 whole leaves
- 100g soft white breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses (If you don't have pomegranate molasses, and who does! use 1 tbsp cranberry sauce or jelly mixed with 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice.)
- 40g chopped walnuts or pecans
- 40g dried cranberries
- grating of nutmeg
- 2 x 320g sheets dairy-free puff pastry
- plain flour, to dust
- 3 tbsp plant-based milk
- 1 tbsp English mustard or Dijon mustard and add a pinch of turmeric

▶▶▶ METHOD

Step 1 Put the dried mushrooms in a heatproof bowl and pour over 500ml boiling water from the kettle. Stir and press them down so they're well covered, then leave to soak.

Step 2 Heat the olive oil in a wide frying pan over a medium heat and fry the onion and chestnut mushrooms until the veg is very soft and the mushrooms look wilted and reduced, about 20 mins.

Step 3 Stir in the garlic and sweet potatoes, then the rehydrated mushrooms and their soaking liquid, leaving the last dregs of the liquid in the bowl (this may contain grit from the mushrooms). Cover and cook for 15 mins until the sweet potatoes are just softened, and most of the liquid has evaporated. Add a splash more water halfway through if the liquid evaporates too quickly.

Step 4 Remove the lid and stir in the chopped herbs, breadcrumbs, molasses, nuts and cranberries. Season well and sprinkle in the nutmeg. The mixture should be stiff enough to resemble stuffing, but not dry – all the breadcrumbs should be coated and have absorbed some of the liquid. Remove from the heat and leave to cool in the pan.

Step 5 Once cool, unroll one of the puff pastry sheets onto a lightly floured non-stick baking sheet or baking tray lined with baking parchment. Whisk the milk and mustard together with a pinch of salt and set aside.

Step 6 Spoon the cooled filling down the middle of the pastry sheet in a neat line, leaving a 5cm border around the edges. Use the mustard-milk mix to brush the borders, then top with the second pastry sheet. Press the pastry around the filling to remove any air pockets, then crimp to seal the sides. Trim off any excess pastry with a sharp knife and use a fork or your fingers to make a pattern around the edge of the wellington.

Step 7 Cut a small steam hole in the top of the middle, then brush the top with the mustard-milk mix. Chill on the sheet or tray for 30 mins. Will keep in the fridge for up to two days.

Step 8 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Remove the wellington from the fridge and brush with more of the mustard-milk mix. Score a pattern into the top of the pastry with a cutlery knife or fork, if you like, then bake for 35-40 mins until golden, puffed up and crisp – cover with foil if it's browning too quickly. Arrange the whole sage leaves on top of the wellington and stick them down with the mustard-milk mix, then return to the oven for 10 mins more.

Step 9 Leave to rest on a board or platter for 10 mins before cutting into chunky slices to serve

REWILDING – IS IT THE BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD?

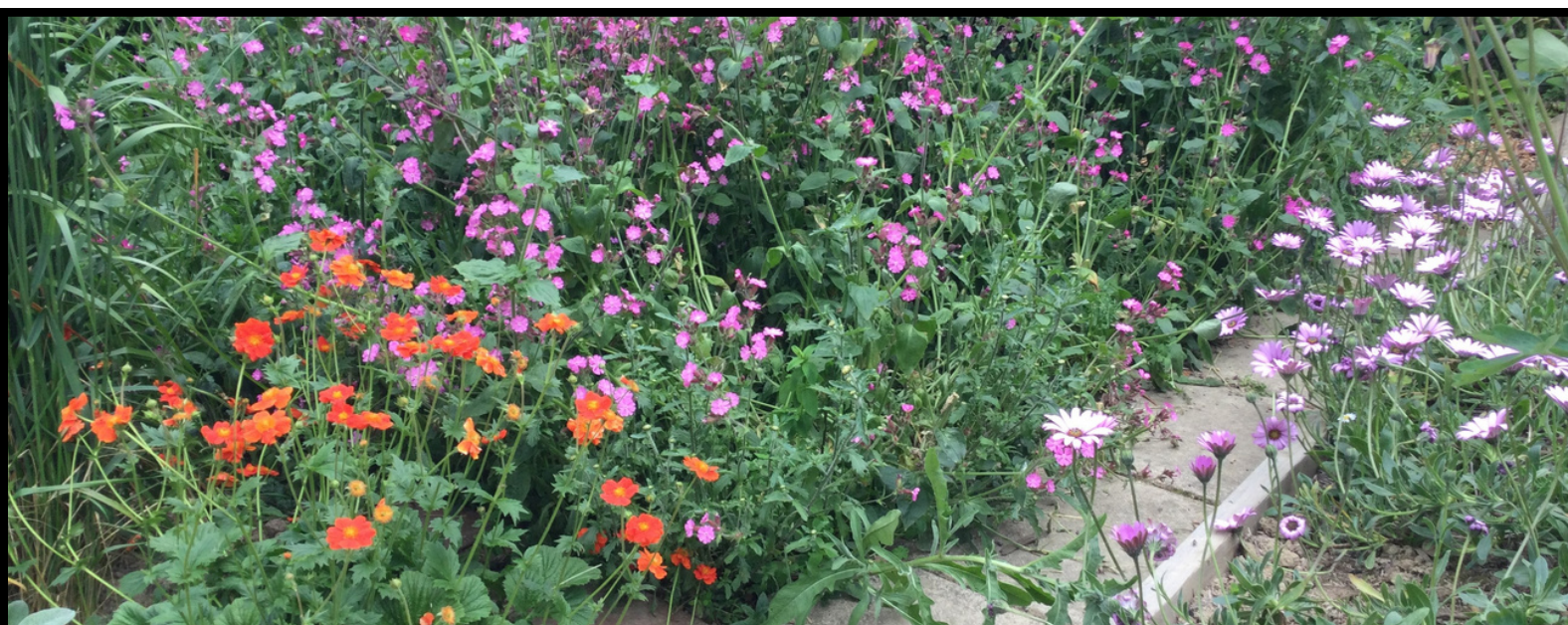
By Ian Stone

To be honest, being like Pooh Bear of little brain, I am confused. As, it would appear, are several well known tv gardening experts. There does need to be a trade off between increasing biodiversity and food production. You can go the whole hog like the Knepp Estate in Sussex where thousands of acres were left go wild, and cattle and pigs free to range. You really improve the biodiversity and produce great quality meat but all you get is meat and no arable/veggie stuff.



In terms of our gardens, we could let everything go wild. Not necessarily pretty, good for biodiversity but not very productive. Most of us like, I think, to produce something edible to enjoy be it tomatoes, beans, courgettes or peppers as well as having a space that is attractive to look at and sit out in. Then the question of plant species raises its ugly head, should we stick to 'native' plants or accept 'late' imports (Roman, Tudor or Modern etc!) mostly equally good for pollinators. With Climate Change i.e. warmer drier summers and wetter winters we may be forced revise our views on what should or can be grown in gardens. Many of the newer and attractive plants can extend the pollinating season and therefore help the survival of bees and butterflies etc. We had a Red Admiral butterfly in the garden last week!

My guess is probably the good old British Compromise, a bit of everything, a rough bit, a 'pretty' bit and space for fruit and veg. Happy Gardening



PS. Try and have a small pond or water feature, we even had a grass snake visit ours this year, a real high.

COP28

By Anne Stone

COP28 is the United Nations Climate Change conference being held this year in the United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December.

The guide includes information on what will happen at COP28; how the Church of England is getting involved and what you can do from home to support.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/cop28-guide.pdf>



In July 2023 the Cop 28 president declared that the summit would focus on

- Fast tracking the transition away from fossil fuels**
- Transforming climate finance arrangements**
- The role of people and nature in climate change**

I think we all feel that Cop 28 although immensely important is out of our remit, pledges made in the past have not been adhered to, new oil and gas fields are being explored and we are all seeing the effects of climatic change, but there are ways we can help:-

- Write to our MP to tell them how important Climate Change is to us**
- Pray. Here is a extract from Cafod's suggested prayers.**

**Inspire world leaders at COP28,
with openness to listen to those most affected by climate change
and with courage to act urgently and wisely,
so that our common home may be healed and restored
and all people, and generations to come, may delight in it.**