

**Environment Agency****Fly-tipping by Ian Walton, senior environment officer**

WHETHER you live in urban or rural communities, at some point you will have come across waste that has been fly-tipped. This could be a few black bags or an old mattress down a back alley, a fridge by the side of the road or a load of soil and rubble dumped in a lay-by.

Fly-tipping harms our environment. It is unsightly and blights local beauty spots and conservation areas. It can cause harm to human health, by encouraging vermin to move into areas or if the waste is hazardous.

It is also a criminal offence.

Statistics released by Defra for the period 2007-2008 showed that there were 1,284,406 reported incidents of fly-tipping in England and Wales. Clean-up costs for these tips totalled almost £63m.

Last year in Hampshire alone there were 32,771 recorded incidents that cost an estimated £1.2m to clean up.

That's money that we all pay in our council tax that could be spent on our schools, looking after vulnerable people or any number of other things. Instead, we are effectively subsidising criminals. Waste crime is big business.

Local authorities and the Environment Agency need your help to combat this type of crime. One way the public can help is to report incidents of fly-tipping to their local authority.

If the waste is "big, bad or nasty", they can report it to the Environment Agency. More importantly, we must change our attitude to fly-tipping.

Next time you are having your drive done or some trees or bushes trimmed or just having a good clear-out, these tips should help reduce the chance of your waste being fly-tipped.

Ask if the person collecting your rubbish is registered as a waste carrier with the Environment Agency. Ask where your waste is being taken – the receiving site should be licensed by the Environment Agency.

Is it too cheap to be true? If someone offers you a price much lower than anyone else then you need to ask why.

Ask the person collecting your waste for a signed receipt with their carrier registration number on it and if possible get the vehicle registration number.

If you have any concerns, don't hand over your waste.

To check whether a person or a site is licensed, or for advice on how to get rid of your waste, you can contact us on 08708 506506 or use the online public register at environment-agency.gov.uk/publicregisters.

Anyone who witnesses fly-tipping or has evidence about the origin of fly-tipped waste should contact their relevant local authority or ourselves on 0800 807060.



Green Nose Day at park

MORE than 200 visitors to St James Park, in Shirley, took part in an environmentally-themed Green Nose Day on Saturday.

The event was organised by 11-year-old schoolchildren Lydia Cavaney and Ben Gardner, with support from the Friends of St James Park. Activities included face painting, storytelling, orienteering, scrap art and environmental activities led by Southampton City Council.



Organisers Lydia Cavaney and Ben Gardner.

Picture by David Wheatley

EASTLEIGH: Proposal for eco-technology 'hub'

Bid to build eco 'Silicon Valley'

A NATIONAL centre of excellence for environmental technologies could be created in Hampshire under an ambitious proposal put forward by two local entrepreneurs.

By Peter Law

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for the businesses park, which will create an estimated 9,000 jobs.

The scheme has been likened to California's Silicon Valley, home to the world's top high-tech companies, and Motorsport Valley in the East Midlands, where Formula 1 teams including Brawn GP are based.

Cutting-edge low carbon energy technologies such as wind turbines, heat pumps, solar collectors, biomass and sustainable building designs could all be researched and developed at the Eastleigh hub.

Eco-technology

The plan, proposed by Charles Burt and Michael Dorgan, has won the backing of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), a powerful coalition of South Hampshire's council leaders.

Mr Burt, an environmental scientist and managing director of The Olive Consultancy, in Chilworth, said construction of the new hub must have started by 2012 if the region wants to lead the country in the emerging eco-technology industry.

"It's very timing sensitive. If we get on with it, grab the space and make it very clear that we are going to do it properly then other people will look to do it with us here. But if we take too long then we'll lose it to another part of the UK," Mr Burt said.

"It will almost certainly be a mixture of buildings and we'd want it to demonstrate the new technologies that are developed so that we can show it isn't so expensive and that it does work."

The hub would create much-needed highly skilled jobs in south Hampshire and potentially attract major national and European funding, Mr Burt said.

Investment from private companies will be crucial to its success, but Mr Burt said they were now trying to gain political support before approaching engineering giants such as Kinetic, IBM and Siemens.

PUSH chairman Sean Woodward, leader of Fareham Council, last night threw his support behind the proposal.

"It is certainly something we are supporting. We have got a lot of good companies around the area who are at the forefront of various examples of environmental technology," Cllr Woodward said.

Fantastic plastic for outdoor sports

FOR most nature lovers spotting a large heap of litter wouldn't be thought of as a good thing.

But for David Richards, pictured, it was an important turning point as it started him down a route to setting up his own eco business – one which he hopes will help transform the outdoor adventure scene.

A keen watersports enthusiast, David, from Bursledon, has been kayaking for around 20 years.

One day, while out on the Hamble, he saw a large amount of polythene sheeting floating down the river.

He had been considering setting up his own business and was struck by the thought that he could marry his hobby with a business and set up a company which tries to improve the environment for outdoor adventure enthusiasts.

"Then, of course, you realise that you're sat in a plastic boat, your surf board is made of plastic and every-



thing to do with the outdoor adventure market has been plastic orientated for quite a long time, which is obviously environmentally disastrous," says the 38-year-old Taunton's College lecturer. "So I thought I'd investigate the possibility of greening up the outdoor adventure market. I started researching the market to see what was available and took it from there."

His company Reearth began trading on the Internet in May 2008.

For David, it was important that all of his company was as environmentally friendly as possible.

Among the products David sells are sandals made from recycled tyres, bamboo fibre base layers and organic cotton clothing.

"We live very much for today as a society. In certain societies people live for what they're going to leave for their children. The tag 'environmentally friendly' isn't used – it's just understood that you look after the planet for the next generation."



Festival fun in a good cause

A MUSIC festival will take over some of Southampton's most popular venues this Saturday to support Oxfam's climate change campaign.

Oxfam Southampton will see bands, DJs and comedians take to the stage at The Hamptons, Goblets, The Old Fat Cat, The Art House and The Soul Cellar.

A wristband, costing £5, gains access to all venues, with proceeds helping to combat climate change and global warming for the future.



Support garden birds this winter

THE summer may have passed and there's a nip in the air but the RSPB is calling on the people of Hampshire to venture outside and help their garden wildlife through the cold winter months.

Saturday is Feed The Birds Day to remind people that garden wildlife needs our help more than ever at this time of year.

In harsh winters, birds like blackbirds, song thrushes, and even exotic waxwings – visitors from Scandinavia – come closer to gardens in a search for food.

Feeders and bird tables can be topped up with calorie-rich foods

such as nyger seed to help goldfinches; mixed seed will help house sparrows; and fruit will help blackbirds.

Even putting out kitchen scraps such as grated cheese will help wrens and cooked/uncooked unsalted bacon will be enjoyed by blue tits.

Autumn is also a great time to put in plants that are good for wildlife such as a berry bearing shrub or a fruit tree.

Hampshire resident Chris Packham, RSPB vice-president and BBC *Springwatch* presenter, said: "What I love about feeding birds is

you can see the good you are doing. The way the birds will just pile into your garden looking for food tells you how important it is to them.

"It makes me feel good about myself, knowing I could be helping a bird survive the winter and go onto to raise chicks next year. It is a nice feeling. I recommend it."