



**'Burnham has (could have) Bags of Life'
Presentation to St. Mary's School
Marsh Road
Burnham-on-Crouch**

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Contents

- Introduction - PortaBrands who?
- Eco Schools Award Programme
- The inconvenient truth about plastic bags
- 'Maldon has Bags of Life' - experience
- Sustainable alternatives



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PortaBrands who?

PortaBrands invent, develop and supply sustainable people-friendly packaging, which does not cost the earth. Their patented award-winning bottle, drink and food carriers can be seen and experienced in action in every major UK town and city as well as at most major sporting and musical events.



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PortaBottle®/M&S - bottle carriers made from 80% paper/carton waste
PortaDrink®/Costa - multi-drink carrier made from unbleached kraft paperboard sourced from FSC managed forests
PortaClick®/Heineken - 4-cup stackable drink tray made from recycled milk and drink cartons
PortaSnack®/Ponti's - 'Skypicnic' made from unbleached kraft paperboard sourced from FSC managed forests
PortaChilla™/Coors - flat-pack + pop-up ice bucket made from unbleached kraft paperboard from PEFC/SFI managed forests



Eco Schools Award Programme

The Government in England wants every school to be a sustainable school by 2020. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) launched their Sustainable Schools Framework in 2006 when the Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP set out challenging long-term aspirations for schools to mainstream learning about sustainable development issues and sustainable practices into everyday school life.

The Eco-Schools Programme is focused around nine key environmental topics:

1. Water
2. Biodiversity
3. Energy
4. Global Perspectives
5. Healthy Living
6. Litter
7. School Grounds
8. Transport
9. Waste

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The inconvenient truth about plastic bags

Population	Bags/day	Bags/year
UK = 61 Million	35 Million	13 Billion
Maldon = 59,000	33,000	12 Million
Burnham = 8,000	4,500	163,000

1. A plastic bag takes 200 million years to make and about 1000 years to breakdown.
2. Oil (which makes plastic) is a depleting precious fossil fuel which may run out within 50 years.
3. There are literally 100's of different types of plastics – some can and some can't be recycled easily. Only with effective plastic-specific recycling can you recover any plastic, but in practice this is difficult to manage.
4. Degradable plastic (plastic with an additive to speed-up its partial breakdown) is not a long term solution and can cause problems in recycling other plastics.
5. Plastic bags cause immeasurable damage to the environment and kill many different marine animals.

Since the recent Daily Mail campaign to 'Abolish Plastic Bags' the UK government and most responsible retail groups are at last changing their attitude to giving away plastic bags in favour of reusable alternatives.

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'Maldon has Bags of Life'



Bags and carriers – for plastic bag-free towns

- A standard range of reusable bags made from jute, cotton and juco (jute/cotton mix)
- Say 'goodbye to plastic bags'!



Reusable eco-friendly bags don't cost the earth (literally) particularly if you can find a willing sponsor/s. The 'Maldon has bags of Life' jute and cotton bags were subsidised in this way. You can see the sponsors on the back of the bag. They cost £1 each and are being retailed for £2 by over 30 retailers in Maldon high street. The bags have just been launched and have been well received by retailers and the public.

Maldon aims to go plastic bag-free by 2009

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The Modbury example

Modbury in Devon is a small town about the size of Maldon. In May 2007, the people of Modbury were inspired and motivated by a lady called Rebecca Hoskings who shared with them her experiences as a BBC camera lady studying the behaviour of marine life and the damage caused by plastic bags.

She rallied opinion and enthusiasm and gained commitment from the retailers to stop giving out plastic bags. They introduced a range of generic 'Modbury branded' bags which included a reusable cotton bag and bags made from 100% corn starch ('biobags').

Modbury has received huge global publicity for these bold actions and continues today with a passion for being the first town in the UK to voluntarily stop using plastic bags. I'm aware of 100 other UK towns now beginning the same process. More information about latest towns to go plastic bag-free on this website link: www.plasticbagfree.com/pbf.php

Come on St. Mary's School.....

let's make Burnham next!



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Eco-friendly bag options

Re-usable bags

This is probably the best option if you can remember to take your bags with you when ever you go shopping. Try to select a bag made from a sustainable raw material which has been sourced from a renewable, abundant crop which has not required man's chemical intervention with herbicides and pesticides. Good examples include Jute (Hessian), Canvas (Hemp) and Organic Cotton.

Try and avoid heavy plastic 'bags for life'. This just perpetuates the 'plastic problem' and gives retailers an excuse to sell you a bag instead of giving you one free. Some retailers will give these away free, but do try to say 'no thanks'.

Disposable bags

If you must have a disposable bag, try and make sure its made from natural, renewable and harvested crop-based materials like corn starch and cellulose (paper/acetate). Where using paper bags make sure the paper is sourced from managed forests with the FSC or PEFC certification.

All these materials are organic and have the added benefit of being biodegradable and in most cases compostable. If a bag is compostable, it should bear the compostable logo and be certified to a standard like DinCerto EN13432.

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The cotton story

Pesticides

Cotton accounts for over 16% of the global demand for pesticide consumption. 1kg of pesticide is applied to every hectare of cotton grown. Up to 3% of agricultural workers worldwide suffer acute Pesticide poisoning with at least 1 million being hospitalised (according to the WHO).

GM 'Bt cotton'

Bt cotton carries a genetically modified gene called *Bacillus Thuringiensis*. This creates resistance to the blow worm – the number one pest for cotton. The seed can't be saved and is modified to terminate at the end of each growing cycle.

The trend now is to move away from Bt cotton allowing farmers to create a viable, sustainable propagation of cotton seeds for long term benefit of the farmer. This along with natural fertilisers (tank silt, green manure and vermicompost). This not only gives peace of mind to the grower but ensures a viable and sustainable business long term.

Organic cotton

It's more expensive than Bt cotton. It is grown almost entirely under fairtrade and ethical labour conditions. It is easier to recycle and biodegrade because it is uncontaminated with pesticide residues.

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Organic cotton – the future

Organic cotton - main producers

Turkey is the main producer with 53% of the market. The US and India are the other main players. China is also starting to take organic cotton seriously. There are about 22 countries globally now producing organic cotton.

In 2005/6 global sales reached US \$583 million Annual demand for retail is growing at 75% per annum and is expected to reach US \$2.6 billion by end of 2008.

Organic & Fairtrade (AOFG-India)

Agriculture and Organic Farming Group is a network of farmers federations and grassroots development organisations. It was set-up to develop organic farming, fairtrade, farmer-led certification (for both ecological and social standards).

One of the objectives of AOFG is to take non-organic cotton growers and over a three year period to manage the transition to organic cotton production. With an office in Hyderabad, India AOFG also provides training and support to its members.

Each year of transition is certified using a carefully documented process. After three years, assuming compliance, the grower is then issued with a certificate of conformity.

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Organic cotton – the future

Skal EKO – Fairtrade quality symbol

Skal is internationally recognised standard for organic cotton production. It operates in accordance with The EC-Regulation 2092/91 for organic plant production. Skal operates in both Turkey and India and other countries.

The Skal EKO quality symbol can be displayed on all Skal-approved products offering the consumer assurance of best practice and rigorous standards of sustainable organic cotton farming and production.

We are able to guarantee Skal EKO certified organic cotton for all current and future orders.



Juco – mixture of jute and cotton



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The jute story



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What is jute?

Jute is a type of plant fiber used to make common items such as rope, twine, chair coverings, curtains, hessian cloth, carpets, sacks and bags. This is accomplished by spinning the fiber into a coarse thread. Despite the fact that jute tends to be rough in texture, fine threads of it are sometimes used to create imitation silk.

The thread created from jute is quite strong, yet it is among the cheapest of natural fibers available. It also has exceptional insulating properties, low thermal conductivity, and antistatic characteristics.

Taking just four to six months to grow to maturity, jute can be harvested much more quickly than trees. Many hope to be able to use jute in order to slow down or prevent deforestation. The majority of the jute used today is grown in the Ganges delta. This is because the plant prefers climates that are both warm and humid, with temperatures ranging from 68 to 104 °F (20 to 40 °C) and a relative humidity of 70-80%. It also requires about two to three inches (5 to 8 cm) of rainfall per week.



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Plastic-free jute - PortaNaturale™

Why laminate LDPE plastic to jute?

Most carriers bags are made from LDPE laminated jute. The LDPE acts as a good barrier and stiffener which are important when making a durable and reusable carrier bag. The jute fabric can be dipped in starch to make stiffer, but the bag will be less durable. Bags we supply to Southsea (picture below) are made from natural jute and stiffened with starch only.

Alternatives to LDPE – pioneering development of PortaNaturale™

In July 2007 we decided to develop a replacement for the plastic laminated jute which resulted in a patent application being filed August 2007.

We are about to launch a biolaminated alternative which means that PortaNaturale™ will be totally sustainable, biodegradable and compostable. We believe this is breakthrough which retailers and consumers will welcome in their quest to source natural products, which are practical and economically viable. The bag performance characteristics of jute + LDPE and PortaNaturale™ are very similar and the cost difference is marginal.

What's Juco?

Juco is a mixture of jute and cotton used to make a quality-looking natural fabric with or without biolaminated liner. John Lewis now use this wonderful material.



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talk to us (or email if you must!)

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www.wearewhatwedo.org

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