

# CLIMATE ACTIVITY PACK

This climate activity pack has been created in collaboration with local community groups who have a shared passion in tackling climate change. By working together, we hope to encourage young people to engage in climate change issues and demonstrate how collectively we are tackling the problem. We hope you enjoy the activities and you are welcome to share the pack with family, friends and classmates.\*

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**We'd love to see your creations!**

 Please send pictures by email to [community@reading.ac.uk](mailto:community@reading.ac.uk)

Special thanks to:

Ethical Reading  
Reading Climate Action Network  
Nature and Green Spaces  
Pangbourne and Whitchurch  
Sustainability Group  
Commando Jugendstil  
Earley Environmental Junior Group  
Erleigh Road Community Garden  
Reading University Society for Arts and Crafts  
UoRHedgehogs

\* If you are part of a local community group committed to sustainability and tackling climate change and would like to submit a new activity to be added to the pack, please contact us at [community@reading.ac.uk](mailto:community@reading.ac.uk).

# Activity 1

CONTRIBUTED BY: Ethical Reading

## Colourful leaves for Reading

### Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**Would you like a greener, cleaner, happier Reading? You can help Ethical Reading make that happen by raising awareness of the need to bring more trees to our town.**

Why not get creative with this fun urban tree art project, making colourful artwork using the best leaves you can find?

1. Find some trees near where you live and pick four or more leaves of different shapes and sizes and take them home with you.
2. Place the leaves on a flat surface, bottom-side-up, and place a piece of paper on top.
3. Using chalk\*, crayon or colouring pencil, rub over the paper above each leaf. This will show the shape of the leaf on the paper. Use a mix of different colours.
4. Now it's up to you to be creative. Maybe you could cut the leaves out and arrange them in an interesting way, or make each leaf into a tree and draw a town landscape around it. It's up to you!
5. Why not add some words to your art about why trees are so important for our town?  
Here are a few example facts:
  - Creating shade and cooling the air in summer
  - Absorbing water to reduce flooding
  - Helping to clean the air
  - Providing food for wildlife, including birds and bugs
  - Making people happier and healthier

Can you think of others?

6. Add your first name and age to the artwork if you like.



Ask a parent/guardian to send a photo of your finished artwork to [sustainability@ethicalreading.org.uk](mailto:sustainability@ethicalreading.org.uk), with the subject line 'Leaves for Reading' for the chance to be featured on Ethical Reading's website and social media.

If you or your parents/guardians would like to share it on social media too that would be great!



[ethicalreading](https://www.facebook.com/ethicalreading)



[@ethicalreading](https://twitter.com/ethicalreading)

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**

\* TIP FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS: If your child used chalk, once the artwork is finished, spraying with hairspray will help to prevent it from smudging.

# Activity 2

CONTRIBUTED BY: Ethical Reading

## Trees for Reading art project

### Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**Would you like a greener, cleaner, happier Reading? You can help Ethical Reading make that happen by raising awareness of the need to bring more trees to our town.**

Did you know that trees...

- provide homes and protection for all sorts of wildlife?
- improve human health by cleaning the air, boosting immunity and reducing stress?
- cool the air in summer by 2-8 degrees C?
- help to reduce the risk of flooding?
- absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, helping to slow down climate change?

Those are just a few of the great benefits to planting more urban trees in our communities!  
You can find more at [bit.ly/trees-for-reading-facts](https://bit.ly/trees-for-reading-facts).

All you need to do

1. Create 'before' and 'after' illustrations to showcase some of the fantastic benefits of urban trees. Use paints, charcoal, crayons, digital art – feel free to get as creative as you like!
2. It's up to you if you want to use the template provided on the following page. Either way, the idea is to show what an area would look like without trees in the 'before' image and what it could look like once trees are planted in the 'after' one.
3. Think about how to illustrate the benefits they could bring. For example, the 'before' image could show grey smog from air pollution, and the 'after' picture could show a nice clean, bright town with lots of trees!
4. You might include wording to highlight one or more of the improvements urban trees can bring to our town.
5. Add your first name and age to your work if you like.



Please send a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [sustainability@ethicalreading.org.uk](mailto:sustainability@ethicalreading.org.uk), with the subject line 'Trees for Reading art project', for a chance to be featured on Ethical Reading's website and social media.

If you or your parents/guardians would like to share it on social media too that would be great!



[ethicalreading](https://www.facebook.com/ethicalreading)

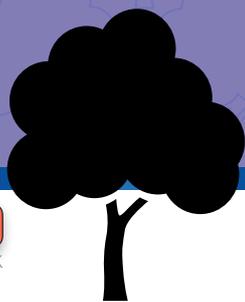


[@ethicalreading](https://twitter.com/ethicalreading)

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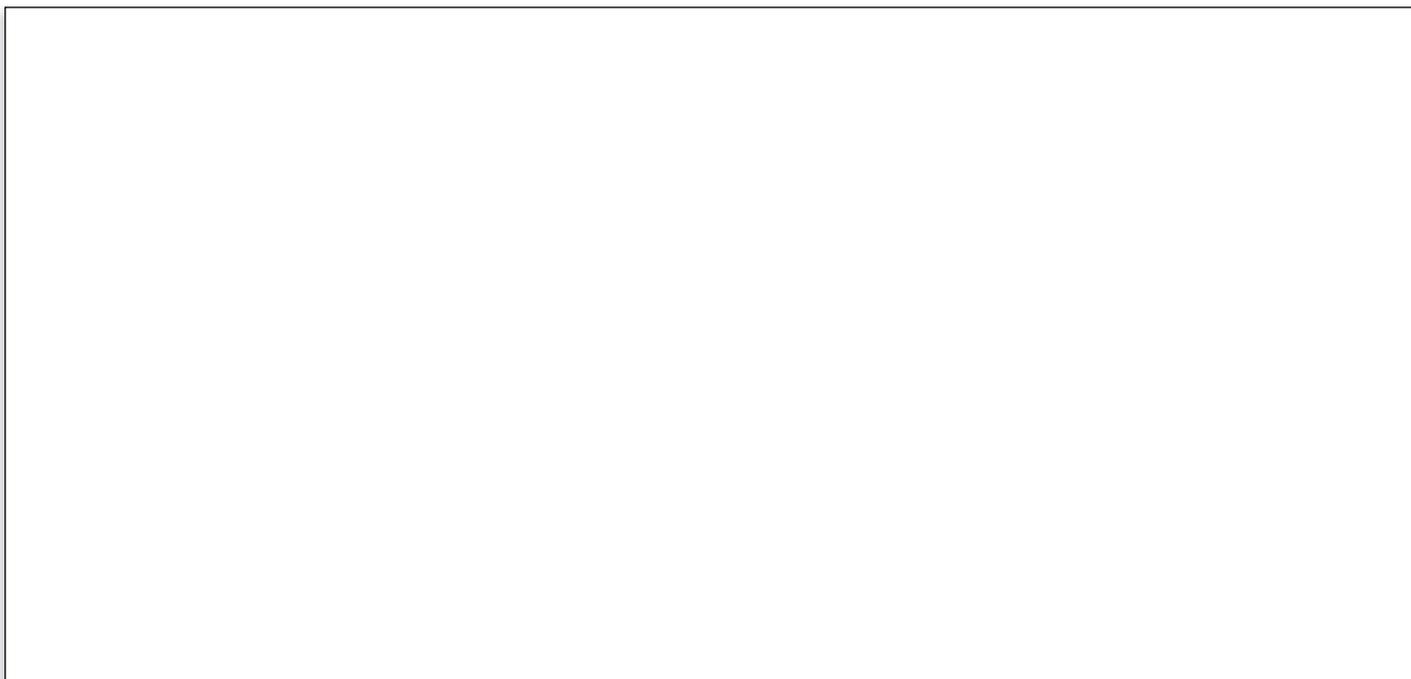


BACK

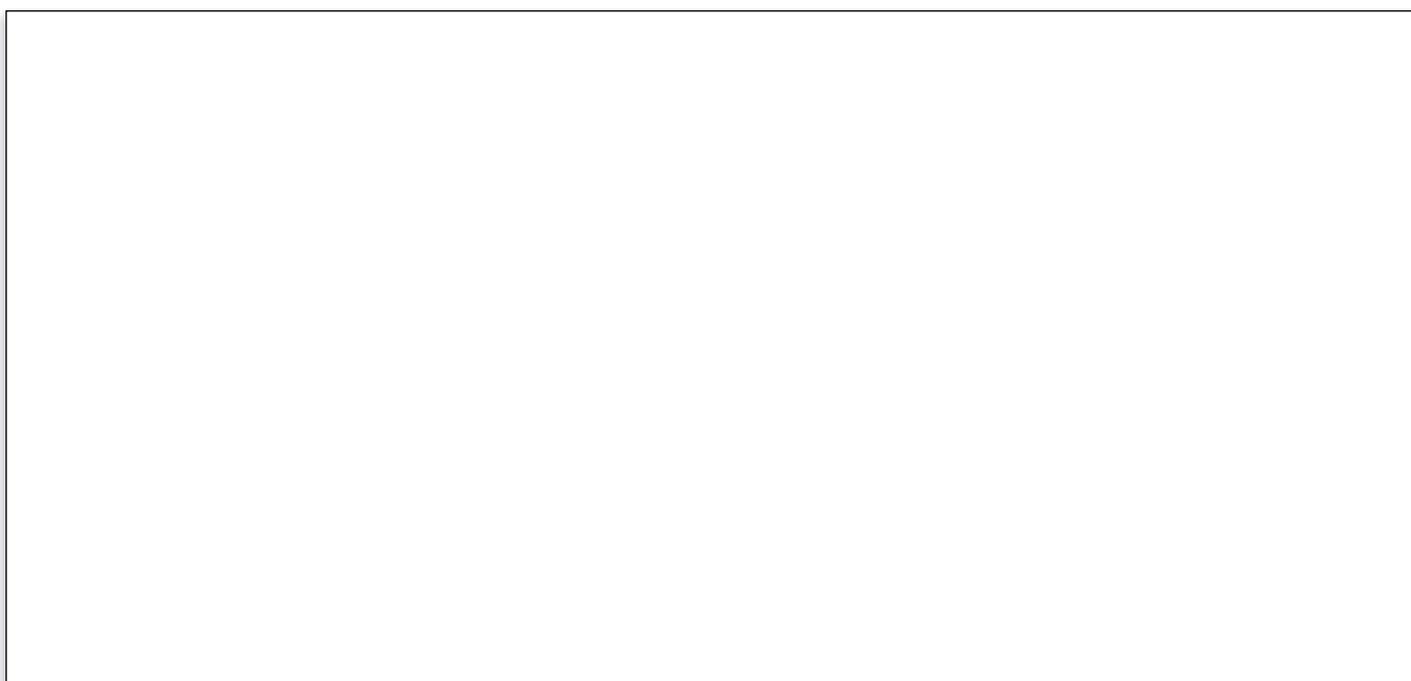


## Activity 2: Template

*'Before'* urban trees



*'After'* urban trees



TIP: [Click here to printout this template.](#)



## Activity 3

CONTRIBUTED BY: *Reading Climate Action Network / Nature and Green Spaces*



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# Identify and monitor areas for change in green spaces

## Calling young artists and nature lovers!

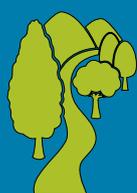
**The Reading Climate Action Plan has many targets. One of these is to enhance the green routes identified in the town under the Reading Local Plan so that they are better wildlife corridors and better for people, particularly in relation to shade during hotter summers.**

The green routes are shown on [my.reading.gov.uk/custom/ReadingLocalPlanSolo.html](https://my.reading.gov.uk/custom/ReadingLocalPlanSolo.html), together with vast amounts of other information. (Once you've opened the link, click on the + next to 'Local Plan' under 'Map Categories'. Then tick only the 'Existing or proposed Green Link policy' to see the green routes on the map). The green routes are sometimes just the width of a footpath and sometimes expand out into parks, play areas and back gardens.

There are three activities that you may be able to help with.

1. Identify what is there at the moment on sections of the green routes.
2. Identify the gaps in hedgelines/ tree lines /shrub lines that could be improved.
3. Monitor changes, particularly where additional planting of wildflower mixes has taken place or grass cutting regimes have changed.

Things change from season to season, and this is not a one-off exercise. It would work best if it is a route on the way to school, or somewhere that you like to go to regularly for another purpose. It can be done as individuals or in a group.



If your school would like to run a longer-term monitoring project to find what is growing in your playground, or routes to school, and how this changes from one year to the next but require training on plant identification in order to do this, please contact [nature@readingcan.org.uk](mailto:nature@readingcan.org.uk), with the subject line 'Training in Plant Identification'. And please send any of your observations to [tricia@marcouse.com](mailto:tricia@marcouse.com), with the subject line 'Change in green spaces'.

# Activity 4

CONTRIBUTED BY: Pangbourne and Whitchurch Sustainability group (PAWS)



## Tree quiz

**Using the map provided, take a walk around Pangbourne and Whitchurch!**

Your tasks

1. Identify the 12 trees noted on the map.  
*Each location is marked with a letter, from 'A' to 'L'.  
 It doesn't matter what order you walk from tree to tree,  
 or how long it takes you! Note: Each letter A to L must be  
 written once, and only once, in the Location column.*

Helpful pictures for identifying trees



2. When you have identified all the trees, add in not more than 10 words, why you think that it is important for everyone to plant more trees:

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Your Name: ..... Age: .....

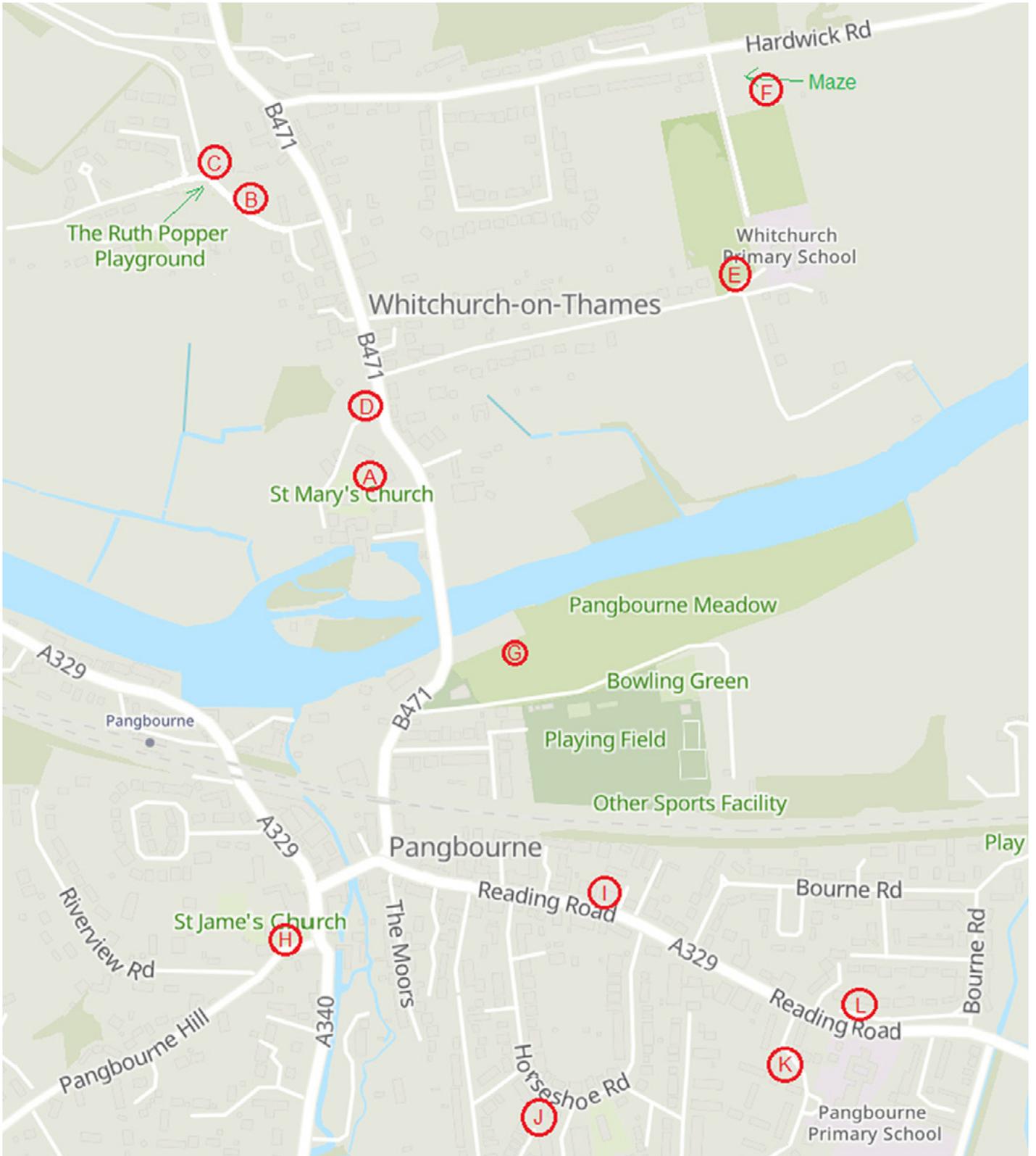
Contact details of your parent or guardian (name and email/phone):

.....

3. Once completed, please send a photo or scan of your form to [pawsg21@gmail.com](mailto:pawsg21@gmail.com)



# Activity 4: Map



# Activity 5

CONTRIBUTED BY: *Commando Jugendstil*



# Sustainable augmented reality

## Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**This activity is aimed at exercising the imagination to come up with practical solutions to the climate and ecological crisis and reinvent the city in a playful – and sustainable – manner.**

### How to get involved



1. Discuss with your friends, family or classmates about a problem connected to the climate crisis that affects your local community or neighbourhood.



4. Ok, now start drawing on your transparent sheet what your solution looks like. Would it be an urban garden on a roof, or an array of solar panels? Go full steam ahead and use your imagination.



2. Start thinking about a solution to that problem! We've provided a number of resources that you can use to find inspirations, but don't feel limited and use your own if you like.



5. This is where the magic happens: point your sheet towards a landmark around you. It could be the roof of a building, a parking lot or an abandoned place. Try to align your drawing with the features of the landscape, so they seem to belong to the same picture.



3. Get a transparent sheet to prepare for the next step. You could obtain it from trash, like the bottom of an empty punnett, or it could be an acetate sheet.



6. Well done! You just started to imagine a sustainable future for your neighbourhood, together with the people that you care about! Now all that's left to do is to take a picture...

**This activity will stimulate research into climate solutions and weigh their pros and cons, together with their suitability to their living conditions. It would also have the added benefit of making climate solutions more tangible and making school children more invested into applying them.**



Please send a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [commandojugendstil@gmail.com](mailto:commandojugendstil@gmail.com), with the subject line 'Sustainable Augmented Reality'. We'll collect all the pictures we receive and make a virtual exhibition. If you or your parents/guardians would like to share it on social media too that would be great!



[CJugendstil](https://www.facebook.com/CJugendstil)



[@CJugendstil](https://twitter.com/CJugendstil)

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**

# Activity 6

CONTRIBUTED BY: *Earley Environmental Junior Group*



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# A home for everyone: happy habitats at your home

## Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**This activity encourages people to design a habitat or food for as many different species as possible. It can be long and thin or tall, but it has to provide something for more than one species/type of creature.**

### What to do

1. By exploring the life cycles and food chains of different creatures, you will better understand how to construct a habitat that caters to and houses multiple occupants.
  - What do insects need?
  - What do birds need?
  - What do reptiles need?
  - What do mammals need?
  - What do fish need?
  - What do plants need?
2. How many of the above needs can be fulfilled using one simple structure in your garden? Write down your ideas. Then have a go at designing some of them. These could be placed in the grounds of your school (ask your teacher where), or maybe, in your own garden.



Please send (or ask a parent/guardian to help you send) a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [nature@earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk](mailto:nature@earleyenvironmentalgroup.co.uk), with the subject line 'Happy Habitats'.

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**

# Activity 7

CONTRIBUTED BY: *Erleigh Road Community Garden*



## Recycled plant pots

### Calling young artists and nature lovers!

The manufacture of plastic plant pots contributes to global warming, and they are hard to recycle too, with lots of them ending up in landfill, being incinerated into the atmosphere or making its way into the oceans. At Erleigh Road Community Garden we try and minimise the use of plastic by making plant pots out of recycled materials.

Here are a few ideas which you can try!

#### 1. Milk carton pots

Cut a milk carton in half and make holes in the bottom for drainage and then decorate the pot using sharpies. You could plant it with basil for pizza-making!

#### 2. Egg shell seedling pots

Egg shells are great for starting off seedlings. Save, clean and then dry empty egg shells and then make a hole in the bottom for drainage. Placed them in an egg box and fill the egg shells with compost and plant one seed in each.

#### 3. Newspaper plant pots

These are also great for starting off seeds as when the seedling is big enough the whole pot can be planted out and the newspaper will biodegrade in the soil. You need newspaper, scissors, a small jar (such as a pesto jar), compost.



- Cut a piece of newspaper in half and fold the paper in half lengthwise to make a narrow strip.
- Place a jar at one end of the newspaper strip so half of the paper is over the bottom of the jar.



- Pull the jar out of the newspaper.
- Push the bottom of the jar into the newspaper pot squashing it down to flatten.



- Wrap the paper around the jar.
- To make the bottom of your pot push the ends of the paper into the open end of the jar.



- It's now all ready for you to sow seeds inside!



Ask a parent/guardian to help you send a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [garden@redlandsparrish.org.uk](mailto:garden@redlandsparrish.org.uk), with the subject line 'Recycled Plant Pots'. If you or your parents/guardians would like to share it on social media too that would be great!



[Erleigh Road Community Garden](https://www.facebook.com/erleighroadcommunitygarden)



[@erleighroadcommunitygarden](https://twitter.com/erleighroadcommunitygarden)

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**



# Activity 8

CONTRIBUTED BY: Reading University Society for Arts and Crafts

## Reusable recycled cloths

### Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**A great idea for this project is to be really sustainable by recycling fabric that would otherwise be thrown away.**

What you need to do

1. Measure 2 square pieces of fabric, 25cm x 25cm, something absorbent, or some linen is a good choice, but you can use anything you like.

*Can you find out how much fabric (clothes) goes into landfill every year?*

2. Place the two squares together with the sides you want to be showing facing together (we'll turn it inside out later). Using a sewing needle and some thread sew the squares together around the edge, leaving a 3-4 cm gap unsewn. Use some scissors to snip off the corners but be careful not to cut through the thread.
3. Pull the cloth inside out through the gap you left then sew the hole closed.

### Congratulations!

**You have created your own environmentally friendly reuseable, recycled cloth!**

- What else could you create out of material that would otherwise be thrown away? a coaster, a pencil case, a bag....?
- We sewed these by hand, rather than using a sewing machine. Can you find out how much energy a sewing machine uses?
- What about other electrical items you can see?
- How much energy does your school use?
- What could you do to save energy and why do you think this is important?



Please send a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [rusac.society@gmail.com](mailto:rusac.society@gmail.com), with the subject line 'Reuseable, recycled cloth'.

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**

## Activity 9



# Melting ice caps



## Calling young artists and nature lovers!

Have a go at this experiment

1. Take a large deep tray and fill it with piles of ice cubes – these are your ice caps
2. Pour in some water for the sea – your ice caps should be taller than your sea surface.
3. Add some soil, compost, stones or rocks to create your land – you could add different types of land to your tray.

## Congratulations!

**You now have your own mini environment with land and sea and ice caps.**

If you have any small toys or figures you could put some people or houses on your land. More houses\* /people etc can be added at intervals throughout the activity depending on the size of your environment - and the current weather!

Ask the children to guess what they think might happen?

**After the activity why not water the garden with what's left over to help save water!**

**(Extension - if you used different land types, e.g soil, sand, rock - can you observe differences between what happens to the different land types? Are some safer for longer?)**



Ask a parent/guardian to help you send a photo or scan of your completed artwork to [community@reading.ac.uk](mailto:community@reading.ac.uk), with the subject line 'Melting ice caps'.

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**

\* TIP FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS: Monopoly houses are ideal.

# Activity 10

CONTRIBUTED BY: UoRHedgehogs

## Hedgehog plant pots

### Calling young artists and nature lovers!

**Save our hedgehogs! UoR Hedgehogs is a student led group at the University of Reading working to make campus a more hedgehog-friendly place.**

You will need:

- empty plastic bottle with lid,
- scissors, paints,
- glue,
- string,
- buttons.

**1. Cut a hole in the side of your bottle, this will now become the top.**

*Tip: make a smaller hole first to allow you to get the scissors in, use the excess plastic you've cut off to cut out some feet shapes.*

**2. Paint the lid as the nose and paint the feet. Glue the string around the end to create the face.**

*Tip: once you've glued around the top, leave it for a few minutes to go sticky before adding the string.*

**3. Glue on some buttons for eyes, and glue on the feet.**

**4. Now just fill with soil and a plant! You can use seeds left over from fruit and vegetables in your kitchen, we used pepper seeds, or you could look up what else is possible to grow from seed and other ways to grow food more sustainably.**

**We made a hedgehog but there are lots of other animals who are vulnerable to extinction.**

Can you find out some others? Within your class, can everyone make a different endangered animal, are there more endangered animals than students in your class? While you are leaving the glue and paint to dry, which of the animals you have made are at risk due to changing climate and how? Perhaps they cannot adapt quickly enough to changing climate or maybe their habitat is being destroyed.



If you or your parents/guardians would like to share a photo or scan of your completed artwork on social media that would be great!

 [UoRHedgehogs](#)

**Thank you for helping us to make Reading a greener place to live, work and learn!**