

# Christmas tree flood protection

Yorkshire business person, Sara Tomkins, has been talking about her innovative idea to tackle flooding – with pre-loved Christmas trees! She set up a company in 2020 that hires out potted fir, pine, and spruce trees over the festive period and collects them back again in the New Year. This way the trees remain alive and continue to grow. Once the trees have grown too large and can no longer be hired out to households, they are planted to give natural flood protection in Mytholmroyd and Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire. Dozens of the original 400 trees have now become too tall for the average living room, and have been planted in the upper parts of the Calder Valley to help stop floodwaters running down into the two towns below. Rooted Christmas tree rental founder, Sara, discussed the project saying, 'It's like people adopt them. They become part of the family. I've got a couple of people



**Pictured:** Christmas trees in pots  
**Source:** Canva

already asking if they can have the same tree again in 2023 and I'm trying to gently break it to them that it's going to be nine foot by then so it won't fit in their house.'

# Single-use plastic cutlery and plates to be banned in England

The government has announced that single-use plastic plates, trays, bowls, cutlery, balloon sticks and certain kinds of polystyrene cups and food containers will be banned in England for environmental reasons. This follows similar announcements already made by Scotland and Wales. Research by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), tells us that each person in England uses an average of 18 single-use plastic plates and 37 items of plastic cutlery every year. Also stating that only 10% of those are recycled. 1.1 billion single-use plates and more than 4 billion pieces of plastic cutlery are used in England annually. This new rule applies to plastic packaging for food and drinks from restaurants and cafes, not supermarkets and shops (which the government will consider separately). Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey, said, 'This new ban will have a huge impact to stop the pollution of billions of pieces of plastics and help to protect the natural environment for future generations.' Other



**Pictured:** Disposable plastic cutlery  
**Source:** Canva

people, whilst welcoming the ban, thought that the government could still do more, with Megan Randles, a political campaigner for Greenpeace UK, saying, 'We're dealing with a plastic flood, and this is like reaching for a mop instead of turning off the tap'.

**Do you think this ban is a good idea? Should more items be banned too?**

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

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# Never-Ending Literary Treasure Hunt

A literary treasure hunt is where children search for and find hidden books, read them and re-hide them for others. One such book hunt is based in Braidwood, a small town in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales, Australia. A variety of books suitable for all ages of children are hidden all around the town, in locations such as shop windows, among shrubs, in parks, on benches and anywhere the children involved think would be a good hiding place for them. Each book is placed inside a plastic bag to keep it safe with a flyer that says: 'You are the lucky finder of this book. Read it, enjoy it, and then re-hide it for someone else to enjoy. Please reuse this bag. Add your name inside the cover and let's see how many can find it!' It has been reported that the people of Braidwood are enjoying the treasure hunt, after hearing about similar ones in other towns and setting up their own. 'It's lovely to watch the little kids' faces when they find the books, and it's just a little bit more magical,' mum of 5, Samantha Dixon said, adding 'I enjoy the fact these books are being read and are not just being left on the shelves and that kids are outside finding them not on screens.'

**Do you think this is a good idea for a treasure hunt? Can you think of anything else that could be hidden for a treasure hunt?**



**Pictured:** Children enjoying the literary treasure hunt in Braidwood. **Source:** Braidwood Hidden Books Facebook page.

Last week's topic:  
**Can you learn how to manage under pressure?**

I think that we can help each other deal with difficult times better, that's the best way.

**Ellie**



I think some people manage better than others when things are hard.

**Andrew**

I think that sometimes you can't but if you just do what you can that's brilliant!

**Selina**

**Let us know what you think about this week's news?**



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