



Community Composting Fact Sheet

The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust has kindly supplied NRG with the following Community Composting Fact Sheet.

What is community composting?

Community composting is when a group of local people get together to compost their green waste (garden and kitchen waste)

The result is rich compost that can be used by residents in their gardens and open space

Why community composting?

One third of the rubbish in an average dustbin can be composted

Currently a massive 7 million tonnes of biodegradable waste is produced in Britain annually

A large proportion of this ends up in landfill sites

If you can't compost at home, you can take garden and kitchen waste to a community compost site meaning that everyone can get involved in composting

How to set up a community composting scheme

Composting site

A community composting site must have good access for cars and people and be more than 250m from housing, schools, hospitals and areas of special wildlife interest

They must also be a reasonable distance from watercourses and large enough for the quantity of green waste expected

Site staff

A site supervisor is required to manage the site and a group of dedicated volunteers (3-4) is also needed to collect and turn the compost

Material

Material for composting can be brought to the site during agreed opening times

Alternatively it can be collected from households or a communal collection point

All material must be checked for pollutants and non-biodegradable waste, such as glass or plastic, before it is composted

Insurance

Public liability insurance needs to be bought to cover accidents, theft, fire and vandalism

Insurance is available for as little as £100 per year

Health and safety

Equipment must be checked for damage before use and protective clothing must be worn on site (gloves and sensible footwear)

A first aid kit and fire extinguisher must be kept on site and all staff must be appropriately trained

Income

Money can be charged to receive green material and for the finished compost

Plants salvaged from green material can also be sold or potting mixes prepared and sold

Training days can be organised to demonstrate composting techniques

Help available

There are grants available to set up the scheme and acquire the necessary equipment, and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) will work on behalf on community groups to secure these grants

It will also advise and guide communities on how to set up a scheme and manage the site

How will the scheme work?

Garden waste from households in the community will be put into compost bays where it will break down into rich soil material

The compost heaps need to be turned every two weeks to make sure the heap gets hot enough to remove weeds and plant diseases and to stop bad smells forming

The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) will help community groups to organise a shredder for large woody material and a small tractor to turn large compost heaps

When the compost is ready it is sieved and put in bags to sell or give away

What can be composted?

Any garden material (leaves, plants, branches, hedge and grass clippings, pond material) and kitchen waste (vegetable and fruit peelings, tea bags, egg shells)

No meat, cooked food, cat and dog droppings or man-made materials (glass, plastic, metal)

How long will the compost take?

When done properly compost can be made in as little as six weeks

The compost ready to use when all garden material has turned into a dark crumbly soil mixture

How to get started

If you live in Neston and would like to support this scheme please call Andy on 01225 812700 or email: andy@nestonvillage.org.uk

If you represent another community you can get help on this subject from Kate Hadow at the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on 01380 725670 (ext 224) or email: kateh@wiltshirewildlife.org