

## Zero Waste Sedbergh December 2018

One of my favourite things about Christmas is finding the perfect present for a loved one, and watching their reaction as they open it on Christmas day. But as my “to buy for” list grows (siblings get wed and start families), each year I find it harder, less enjoyable, and dare I say it a bit of a chore. I anticipate the gifts I will likely receive from others, and I find myself making purchases based on feelings of obligation. My heart sinks at the thought of spending money I don’t have on gifts I know aren’t needed, and are possibly not even wanted.

Lotions will spend eternity at the back of the bathroom cabinet, candles will sit unburned on the mantelpiece, and the latest celebrity autobiography will likely stay unread on the bookshelf for Christmases to come.

According to one survey, last year £5 billion was wasted on unwanted Christmas gifts in the UK. Let that sink in - *£5 billion!*

Now I’m not suggesting we go all Ebenezer Scrooge on each other: *“every idiot who goes about with ‘Merry Christmas’ on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart”* - a tad extreme even for me (although boiling two things in the same pot *is* quite Zero Waste). But there must be an alternative to filling each others houses with “stuff” for the sake of it...

Well here are a few suggestions you may find helpful, for how to gift wisely:

**Buy Less:** Agree with your family that each of you buys and receives a single gift this year. Put names in a hat, and each draw one person for whom you buy something that they will really appreciate, on behalf of the whole family.

**Buy Local:** If you are blessed with money to spend at Christmas time, why not support local independent businesses rather than the big high-street brands.

**Buy Pre-loved:** Many people would love to receive second-hand books, vintage clothes, kitchen equipment... and children don’t care if a toy has a label on or not. We are truly blessed in Sedbergh to have some wonderful charity and second-hand shops, so why not give them a Christmas boost?

**Make it Yourself:** If you own crafty bones, use them! Knit hats, make tree decorations, truffles, cushion covers, handmade soap... the list really is endless and will add a truly personal touch to your giving.

For more tips and ideas on how to have a Zero Waste Christmas, please visit [www.zerowastesedbergh.com](http://www.zerowastesedbergh.com)

Merry Christmas!  
Suzie Pye