

Scotland's First ethical Biofuel "Tea Trike" gains bespoke Storm Kettle design

We are an eco-friendly Edinburgh-based tea business with a huge passion for tea, the environment and all things quirky!

My wife Kirsty and I started The Strange Brew Tea Co. back in November 2013. We both want to follow our passions and spread the joy of great tasting (and somewhat unusual) tea to the masses!

We started with small markets, selling loose leaf tea, and only being able to offer small samples to passers-by...So! One cold winter's night, we had the strange idea of taking our tea mobile and effectively setting up a tea-shop on a tricycle...and so the "Tea Trike" was born!

We now serve great loose-leaf tea from only members of the Ethical Tea Partnership (and some great filter coffee for all you coffee fans) which we then place into degradable individual tea-bags, whilst using only compostable and recyclable packaging (including Vegware), and as you'll find by reading on, using only a sustainable energy source to heat our water to boiling. Phew!

Our next problem however, being environmentally conscious, was our power-source for heating enough hot water to keep everyone hydrated. We didn't want to use fossil fuels (gas/generators) and electricity was not looking good following a few long equations involving a truck load of solar powered trickle fed 12V/50ah batteries. We also wanted to be completely self-sufficient.

All was looking lost for our eco-friendly powered hot water device...until a quick chat with a musician friend (who also

happened to be a chemical engineer) mentioned Bio-Fuel. A few more late evenings of research led to our current fuel source: Scottish Sustainable Woodchip in the form of Briquettes. So, in burning SSW (bio-fuel) we are only releasing carbon from recently deceased tree bits, which is then recaptured by replacement trees. The fuel itself is near smokeless and almost completely combustible.

Now, here is the final piece to the puzzle. We currently use an old stove, boiler and flue combination on our trike which is highly inefficient in terms of heat transfer. The fire heats the water from below taking the water around 20 minutes to boil 4 litres, which also means we use more bio-fuel than we need to.

We have spoken to Storm Kettle who are renowned for their efficient kettle burner designs, transferring heat up a steel funnel (through the water) and therefore maximising boiling potential. This is perfect. The guys at Storm Kettle are currently producing a bespoke 6 litre model for us, which crucially has a built in tap (as we can't tip it due to the necessity of a flue).

We are currently in the middle of a Kickstarter campaign to help us finance the finished Storm Kettle, as it has been 4 months in the making and is going to cost a lot more than we expected, but we are nearly half way to our target!

You can see more about the project at <http://kck.st/li03ER0> or by searching for "Scotland's first bio-fuelled "Tea Trike" boosts efficiency". All support is rewarded with various quirky teas, shortbread, and even some vintage tea-ware.

Whilst growing the business, we have been attending private events (such as small local markets, the RSPB Birdfair at Hopetoun House, and Montrose Music Festival) and will be attending Ardbeg Day at St. Andrew Square today, the Historic Motoring Extravaganza at Thirlestane Castle on Sunday, and the

East Fortune Airshow and The Scottish Car Show later this summer. We are also in the final stages of adding some vintage charm to the streets of Edinburgh by obtaining a permanent spot to trade in our eco-friendly manner...!

Submitted by [Jim Strange](#)

