



# Turn your Christmas cards into trees!

The first Christmas card was commissioned by Sir Henry Cole in 1843 to persuade the British public to use the new Penny Post. The card showed three generations of a family raising a  toast to the card's recipient: on either side were scenes of charity, with food and clothing being given to the poor.

Many a card has been sent over the ensuing 173 Christmases, and today many cards are sold in aid of charities – but what happens to those cards when the festivities are over? Are you currently looking at a pile of them, wondering whether you should try to make them into next year's gift tags or simply put them out with the recycling? Do you feel a tiny bit guilty that all those trees were felled for something with such a short shelf life? Now another charity is offering you a way to feel better; through its partnership with Marks and Spencer's **The Woodland Trust** (the largest woodland conservation charity in the UK) is giving you the chance to recycle your cards *and* help to plant more trees across the UK.

 All you have to do is collect up your cards, take them to your nearest M & S and put them in the special collection bins; you'll find them in stores in Princes Street, Morningside, Chesser Avenue, Straiton and Ocean Terminal. The bins will be available until 31st January, and M&S has pledged to plant a tree for every 1,000 cards donated (if your children are at primary school, they've probably accumulated that many single-handed...)



Over the last 19 years the Trust has collected over half a billion Christmas cards and 245,000 trees have been planted; local communities have taken the scheme to their hearts, with

thousands of people, including schools, community groups and businesses, clubbing together to collect up their cards. M&S came on board in 2008 and began running the scheme in 2012 – with the Trust still the benefactor. **Dermot O’Leary, Jo Brand, Julia Bradbury, Hugh Dennis and Cerys Matthews** are also backing this year’s scheme in a bid to see more trees planted in the UK. Matthews said;

*‘Just look at the trees, and what they do for us, the oxygen we breathe, the insect, bird and animal life they sustain, they’re extraordinary! And you can help the Woodland Trust plant even more JUST by donating unwanted Christmas cards...’*

✘ The Woodland Trust’s **Joanne Mathieson** said ‘Christmas is a time of year where we think about giving to others and this is great way that your Christmas gesture can keep on giving. Hundreds of thousands of trees have been planted thanks to the generous support of the public – creating beautiful habitats for people and wildlife to enjoy.’

If you’re part of a school, business or community group that wants to rally people to collect Christmas cards, you can download a poster and find lots more information on the Woodland Trust’s website [here](#).

The partnership with the Woodland Trust is part of **M&S’s** ✘ **‘Spark Something Good’** campaign to help customers and colleagues make a real difference. **Jenny McPartlin**, Store Manager at **M&S Edinburgh**, said ‘This year at M&S we’ve been working hard to encourage our local customers to get involved and Spark Something Good – from fundraising, to volunteering, to recycling. Through our partnership with the Woodland Trust the small action of dropping your Christmas cards into a store can help make a big difference in planting trees across the UK.’

✘ Henry Cole's Christmas card was all about giving – to friends, and to those in need. In the 19th century it was common for Christmas and other greeting cards to be recycled by women's service organizations who collected them and removed the pictures, to be pasted into scrap books for the entertainment of children in hospitals, orphanages, kindergartens and missions. Today you can use the cards your friends gave you to create new woodland for future generations to enjoy.