

Step-By-Step Guide for Building Home Composters *with Pitlochry & Moulin Men's Shed*

PKC's Waste Services Team joined forces with the Pitlochry & Moulin Men's Shed as part of the Zero Waste Foodie Project #FoodWasteEqualsClimateChange.

Participants in the Zero Waste Foodie Project were invited to keep a Food Waste Diary for up to 4 weeks, and the Waste Services Team emailed hints, tips and recipes to the participants on an ad-hoc basis during this time to help each householder reduce their avoidable food waste and recycle more of their unavoidable food waste.

The participants were also offered a home composter – made of pallets – to divert their food (and garden) waste from landfill. Some of the participants already had a brown bin but wished to compost at home to reduce their carbon footprint, and others were not on a brown bin route and therefore were previously sending all their food and garden waste to landfill.



The House of Bruar kindly donated pallets for this Project, and the Community Payback Team transported the pallets from the House of Bruar to PKC's Pitlochry Depot where they are stored before being installed in people's gardens as home composters.

If your household would like to become a Zero Waste Foodie participant, and/or have some pallets to make a home composter, (using the following instructions) please email ZeroWasteCommunity@pkc.gov.uk. Information about home composting can be found at www.pkc.gov.uk/composting.

To build your own composter, you will need: 4 pallets, a saw, some hinges and screws, some metal fixings and a hammer. If you are clearing the ground, you will also need a spade.

Step 1 – Clear the ground

A composter should be on flat ground or a gentle slope. It is fine on grass, soil, or a hard surface.



Step 2 – Assemble the first two sides

Position the first two pallets at 90 degrees and attach the first fixings – one near the bottom and one near the top.



Step 3 – Assemble the third side

Repeat Step 2 with a third pallet.

Step 4 – Cut the fourth pallet in two

This will create a step-over into the front of the composter and a hinged door. The height of the step-over keeps the material inside and is the ideal size for emptying a wheelbarrow.



Step 5 – Position the step-over into place and fix the sides securely



Step 6 – Position then secure the door into place using two sets of hinges

The hinges need to be placed on the closed side, one set at the top and one set at the bottom of the door. i.e. Looking side-on at the composter, the hinges are at the top and near the middle of the composter.



Step 7 – Fixing the hook

To keep the composter door closed, a hook needs to be fitted to the open side of the composter.



Step 8 – Start using your composter

There is lots of advice for home composting at www.pkc.gov.uk/composting. If you have a few sticks and branches, it is a good idea to arrange these in the base of the composter so that air travels underneath and around the composter contents. Also add torn up egg boxes and empty toilet rolls before adding the first load of grass cuttings and garden waste. The key is to have a 50:50 mixture of browns to greens (nitrogen to carbon) so include shredded paper, scrunched up newspaper and cardboard with your vegetable peelings, fruit cores and garden trimmings.



