



creative expression

In this section Charlotte Chapman explores the diversity of creative expression in people's daily lives. We all have a creative energy and express it in a variety of ways. Charlotte's background is design and she is the founder of Envired, an environmental design and technology education organisation. Creativity and sustainability are her great passions.



creative living

A sustainable lifestyle by Lisa Guy

There's an idea that we're not responsible for climate change; that it's just reflective of a universal weather pattern. I don't agree with this view, but even if I did it would not alter my passion to try to live in a way that I believe we are designed to live; as creative, intelligent and respectful beings on our planet.

I really enjoy challenging the 'norm'. We've gone wrong and it feels right to create a new way. When our farm came along it was exactly what we needed; dilapidated with huge potential, and so windswept that a wind turbine made perfect sense! We now have an Iskra 5 kW turbine that produces all our electricity and we sell about a fifth of what we generate each year to the National Grid. I produce food for our community and I've been running my beef box business since we started here 13 years ago. I'm paid or I trade! My favourite exchange is for haircuts at a friend's trendy salon. Other front runners have been a second-hand dishwasher and fish straight off the boat. It's a fun way to go about things. It benefits everyone and makes us all feel connected.

Growing vegetables has been more of a challenge because it's so windy here. Shelter belts have been a must and a polytunnel hosts apricot and citrus trees and grapevines, all producing valuable fruit, along with basil, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and lettuces. A polytunnel is great to work in on wet windy days! I also trade our fruit and vegetables for help on the land. I find people need to reconnect and re-skill and this has been a heart-warming exchange over the years.

Our other big move has been to home educate our three



children. My husband and I wanted to equip our children with life skills and give them the opportunity to learn through their environment. It also means that we're not forever jumping in the car! We've become a really strong team on the farm. The boys rear birds for the table and collect their eggs. My eldest son is now doing much of the field work in our tractor. My youngest is developing his interest in bees. My daughter and I train our horses and ponies to pull out logs from our wood. We also trot around in the trap on errands, which makes people smile.

Our farm has become a special place. We have been inspired by so many people around us. It's good to chat at the dinner table about exciting new plans, share recipes for elderflower jam and wine, or go foraging for a hedgerow salad: the countryside is packed with ingredients.

Our life is evolving and new opportunities are constantly arising and keeping us busy. It's a great way to live and it doesn't cost the Earth.