

Trojan Mice Group visit to the Eco Pantry on Bailgate, Lincoln

Wednesday 19 March 2025

Watching 'Blue Planet 2' during Covid was the inspiration for Johann Bridges' eco-friendly, zero waste 'Lincoln Eco Pantry' on Bailgate. About 15 members of the Trojan Mice group heard how the programme's deeply shocking evidence of our planet covered with plastic and most worryingly, micro-plastics, inspired her to set up her business.

The central ethos of the Eco Pantry is to have no or absolutely minimal plastic and to create as little waste as possible. Goods are delivered in large refillable bags and cleaning products and food arrives in huge tubs. Johann encourages customers to bring their own reusable containers which are weighed ahead of being filled by them, and then again afterwards. The empty tubs are sent back to the manufacturer for them to be refilled.

Johann encourages customers to shop carefully and responsibly, buying only what they need and changing their shopping habits gradually, focussing on one type of product at a time. She does a huge amount of research into each product and her suppliers, always alert to any changes in their manufacturing processes or ethics. She sources organic goods where possible and also aims for products which are produced 100% slavery-free and where workers are paid fair wages.

Johann tries to source her stock as locally as possible and now has a large number of companies within Lincolnshire from whom she purchases her supplies. Soap and beauty products, for example, are all made and sourced within a 30 mile range. She also aims to sell the products at as fair a price as possible to reduce costs to consumers.

A huge range of largely organic products - teas, sweets, dried fruits and baking essentials are available upstairs to purchase. We noticed the quality of some of the products, such as dried fruits, to be much better than the ones for sale in traditional stores.

Johann educated, informed and entertained us in a lively and interesting way. Her passion and commitment to the environment was infectious. At the end of the discussion we were eager to check out the stock and refill our cupboard shelves, some also picking up a few tasty chocolates and nibbles to help them on their journey home! It was an inspiring and really informative visit.

Take a look for yourselves next time you are in the Bail! Maybe eco-friendly, zero waste shopping will become a habit.

Robyn Crosby