

THE **ECO-FRIENDLY** CARD CO.

The Eco-friendly Card Company, Glebe Cottage, celebrates its 25th anniversary this September with festivities due to kick off at the NEC Autumn Fair (4F44) where the publisher will be giving away twenty five boxes of champagne chocolates!

It's twenty-five years since art student / photographer Scott Morrish set up card publisher Glebe Cottage Studio (now known as The Eco-friendly Card Co) in order to support his passion for photography. With a plan that barely scraped a 'D' in A-level business studies he obtained a small bank loan sufficient to set up an 'office' in his bedroom (in his parents' house - the original Glebe Cottage) and a darkroom in a garden shed.

With the additional support of the Princes Youth Business Trust the first four Glebe Cottage cards were created, featuring images of wild Dartmoor scenes. For the first few years when Scott wasn't in the darkroom, or wandering the moors with his large format camera, he drove around rural Devon selling his cards of local views out of a banana box in the back of his rusty Datsun Sunny car.

Sue joined the business in 1996 after leaving university with a degree in English and Anthropology and by her own admission, "knowing nothing about running a card business whatsoever". With their mutual passion for the environment and wild places featured in Scott's photography it was personal conviction, rather than current trends, that led them down the environmental route for the business and it was about this time that Glebe Cottage's first environmental commitment was born, to only use recycled envelopes with their cards. The logic was simple; why cut down trees to make envelopes that will only make one journey before they are ripped open, screwed up and thrown away?

Sue Morrish said, "We really wanted to understand the environmental impact of how we published our products, so we spent a long time trying to research everything from the types of inks we used, to the bag we packed the card in. It was understanding the issues that prompted us to create the list of 'Eco-commitments' that still determines how we create our products today."

Things have moved on a long way since then. Glebe Cottage was the first publisher to switch to compostable packaging back in 2006, and the first direct-to-retail publisher to obtain FSC® certification. In 2008, it became the UK's first CarbonNeutral® greetings card company* and won Gold for environmental best practice in printing and publishing at the Green Apple Awards. Glebe Cottage went on to scoop top prize in the product category at the BCE Environmental Leadership Awards in 2010 and more recently introduced cards printed on 50% recycled 'coffee-cup' waste.

The publisher's plans to mark 25 years aren't limited to champagne chocolates! Over the coming year The Eco-friendly Card Co will support a small charity or organisation each month as a way of 'giving something back'. This initiative starts in September by supporting 'Toilet Twinning', a water and sanitation charity that aims to 'flush away poverty, one toilet at a time'. (The publisher's twinned toilet is located in a village in Malawi, South East Africa.)

Editors Notes:

- The Eco-friendly Card Company, Glebe Cottage, has exclusively used 100% recycled envelopes for its products since 1996. Ten years later the company became the first direct-to-retail greetings card publisher in the UK to obtain an FSC chain of custody and the first to use compostable packaging.
- Glebe Cottage's environmental commitments include exclusive use of alcohol-free print technology, 50% and 100% recycled boards, green energy and UK suppliers. *Glebe Cottage now offsets its carbon emissions through the charity Co2 Balance.
- The Eco-friendly Card Company publishes art and photographic greetings cards, calendars and stationery using distinctive artwork from contemporary artists. It supplies independent retailers across the UK.

Supporting images: Sample images from across the years, timeline and product shots are available by contacting sue@glebe-cottage.co.uk or call 01626 369269.