



Meet the people helping to heal the world

Words: Maxine Clayman Photography: Iain Phillipot, Thomas Sovsende

Whether you're a celebrity or a mum we all have a part to play in saving the planet as these pioneers show ▶

THE DESIGNER

Alexandra Boyd, 44, from London, is an interior designer who works with people to help them make their homes as environmentally friendly as possible



'I got into the business of green designing because as a designer I can have a powerful effect on the things we use in every day life. It's up to me to offer ecologically sound alternatives. People have this idea that if you're green you have to compromise on style but that isn't the case. Your living space can still look gorgeous and sexy.'

'What I'm offering people isn't just a choice of interiors. It's a lifestyle. And my crusade is to raise awareness of the importance of being green.'

'Fossil fuels are getting rarer and we need to stop polluting the planet, so I offer people solutions. We need to be realistic about making changes, so for example it may not be practical to have a wind turbine if you live in the city. But there are elements, such as using recycled glass tiles, everyone can take on board.'

'And they don't necessarily cost a fortune. If anything they can save you money in the long term and as a homeowner it makes sense to take preventative measures to preserve your property. Even small changes, such as making sure windows are insulated to prevent heat loss, using recycled fabrics or, if you're remodelling, upgrading your old boiler for a more energy-efficient model, can cut down on energy bills.'

'I also want to build my own carbon-zero house. This means that every element used to build the house, and the energy used inside, emits the least amount of carbon possible – from using recycled water to installing solar panels to generate electricity.'

'Friends tell me they've switched to ecologically friendly products as a result of conversations we've had and I believe the way forward is to make people aware of the alternatives.'

'As a designer I can have a powerful effect on what we use every day'

For more info see www.alexandraboyn.com

THE TEACHER

Gill Rugg, 52, from Ridgeway, Sheffield has been a teacher for 30 years



'Global warming is a problem that is happening within our children's lifetime. Changing the world won't happen overnight so that's why it's imperative for us to educate our youngsters – they're the ones who will have to face the consequences.'

'If I told pupils at my infant and junior school that we were going to talk about environmental issues they'd think it was going to be boring. So it's important to find a way of putting it into a context to which they can relate.'

'For instance, we take the children to landfill sites so they can experience the sights and smells firsthand and we can explain the wider issues. And we use visual aids, perhaps everyday items from shops, to bring topics such as packaging to life.'

'We also organised an assembly where

each class showed what they had made from recycled materials, such as carrier bags and clothes. And I have a recycling team of about eight pupils in my class who collect all the rubbish from the bins.'

'The school also works with Recycle Now and has initiatives such as Energy Saving Week, where we discuss reasons for not using cars and the dangers of pollution. We encourage the children to take responsibility for their environment and to feel proud of the area they live in, so they will want to preserve it.'

'And we get the children involved in green issues through our school council. They debate issues such as leaving lights on in classrooms and how to reduce waste.'

'If we can excite the pupils to take on board what they learn and put it into practice, they in turn influence their parents, making them rethink their way of life too.'

For information on how to get involved in recycling visit www.recyclenow.com

PIC OF ANDY BROCKLEHURST

THE SHOPKEEPER

As green category director for Tesco, Andy Brocklehurst, 40, is responsible for green products and packaging in all Tesco stores

'Having children makes lots of people think about the future and with my wife expecting a baby I'm no exception. From a personal perspective it's made me more conscious of environmental issues. The added bonus for me is through my role at Tesco I'm given the opportunity to extend my beliefs and play a part in helping to create positive change.'

'For example I'm looking into ways we can reduce our packaging as Tesco is committed to reducing it by 25 per cent by 2010. And I organise workshops with buyers and liaise with our suppliers to constantly identify new opportunities in a bid for us to improve our green initiatives.'

'We're hoping to introduce carbon labelling in the next few years. This will allow customers can see for themselves how much CO₂ is generated in the making of the products they buy, allowing them to make greener choices.'

'Our aim is to engage customers and point them in the right direction when it comes to being green. From feedback we've had it seems the majority of consumers want to do more so it's down to us to help them get started. It's about giving people the option. We don't want to dictate to them what they should buy.'

'I'm convinced of the difference I can make, not only as a consumer, but also in terms of Tesco as a collective. If we can influence our customers to be more responsible it will hugely impact the planet.'

'And in turn we want to listen to the needs of our customers so we can work together in partnership to secure our future. It will take time but with the right guidance and support we'll get there.'

THE STUDENT

Emily Cummins, 20, from Skipton in Yorkshire is a university student and winner of the British Female Innovator of the Year 2007 and the Technology Woman of the Future Award

'My granddad was into technology and when I was growing up I'd sit in his shed, and watch him make things, so I've always been fascinated by the planet's natural resources and how to utilise them.'

'Then at school I entered a design competition. It focused on sustainability so I developed a water carrier that could be used in the developing countries.'

'But the real wake-up call for me was attending a conference on sustainability. The speaker described how we will run out of fossil fuels if we don't make changes and I was really shocked. It hit home that I needed to do something to help the situation.'

'So I decided to take an everyday item and adapt it to use sustainable energy. My eco-friendly fridge uses sunlight to

evaporate water through sheep's wool, which is packed between two aluminium cylinders. It doesn't need electricity and is recyclable, making it ideal for transporting medicines in developing countries.'

'Inventing isn't about the money for me. I want to teach people how to use what I've developed to make their lives easier. And, hopefully, I can use what I've learned to educate other young people in this country too.'

'I'm also an ambassador for the *Make Your Mark Campaign*, which encourages young people to make their ideas happen. And I've been going into schools to discuss the impact we make on the environment and how we can make a difference.'

'A lot of damage has already been done to the planet but we can slow it down. There's a lot we can do in terms of recycling and re-using resources. We just need to be more imaginative at looking for the solutions.'

For more information on the *Make Your Mark Campaign* see www.starttalkingideas.org

'Inventing isn't about money for me. I want to make people's lives easier'



THE ROCK STAR

Midge Ure, 53, has lobbied some of the most powerful leaders in the world about environmental issues. He spearheaded the historic campaigns of Live Aid in 1985, co-writing *Do They Know It's Christmas*, and Live 8 in 2005. He most recently headlined a green-themed concert in Bath to rouse Britain's entrepreneurs to take action

'In 1985 Band Aid was perceived as something ridiculous. It was almost unheard of to do charity work on such a scale. But in the last 20 years that vision has changed and grown. It's cool to care. And once you become embroiled in a cause like this you can't just walk away.

'Looking back I've no doubt that the famine in Africa can be attributed to climate change. People may question whether events like Live Aid make a difference. The reality was the amount raised was minuscule in comparison to the scale of the crisis but it helped to alter people's perceptions of charity and we can do the same with environmental issues.

'Politicians have to follow the party line, and they have yet to fulfil the promises they made two years ago. With 800 children a day dying in Africa the G8 summit appears to have been a lot of hot air so we can't just keep lobbying the government in vain.

'It's easy to take the attitude "why should we care?" but I could be equally irresponsible and say, for instance, that I might as well kick my kids out into the street, buy myself a sports car and take off on a trip round the world. What we do now is the foundation of what our ancestors will inherit.

'Recently I worked with organisations such as Greenpeace to think laterally about working together to combat climate change. We can't wait for those in power to sort out the problems we're facing. We've got to take responsibility for ourselves before it's too late.'

'Live Aid helped to alter people's perceptions of charity. We can do the same with environment'

THE BUSINESSWOMAN

Businesswoman Melissa Hardy, 35, from Pontefract, is the UK's sole distributor of the *Electrisave*, an electricity-saving device

'I don't want my daughter to grow up with the consequences of us not having acted. That's why I want to motivate people to be aware of the how much energy they're wasting.

'The *Electrisave* is a device that shows how much electricity you're using in your home and you can programme it to show how many CO₂ emissions are being produced.

'It can also be set to show how much electricity you're using in monetary terms, as opposed to kilowatts. So, by saving energy, you can see you're also saving money – something to which everyone can relate.

'The information we give people allows them to use their electricity

more wisely. It pricks your conscience because you can see just how much energy you're wasting and that in turn helps adapt your thinking.

So when I get home I know the levels my *Electrisave* should be showing which means I know if I've got the washing machine on or the lights haven't been switched off. I'm very aware of things, such as making sure I don't leave anything on standby or not filling my kettle up to the top, to be more energy efficient. And I know as a result my daughter is conscious of the amount of electricity she's using when, for example, she's playing her stereo.

'We're giving people choices to fit their lifestyle. We live in a materialistic society but we're not telling them to get rid of all their gadgets.'

For details of how to get an *Electrisave* see www.electrisave.co.uk



'I'm motivating people to be aware of how much energy they're wasting'



THE FARMER

Nicholas Moor, 47, is an organic farmer near Faversham, Kent

'Farming has been in my family for generations. My grandfather started his farm in 1923 and we're still a family-run business today. I've always loved being at one with nature. For me nothing beats the feel of working outdoors as opposed to being cooped up in an office.

'My farm is 150 acres and we specialise in growing apples and pears. We've also invested money in processing fruit to produce Moor Organic Juice so we use 100 per cent of what we're growing. And we process all our fruit on the farm so no additional transport is involved.

'In 1999 we converted our farm from a conventional one to become organic, a process that takes three years. It means we can't use any artificial pesticides or fertilisers. All our sprays are natural, so rather than use weedkillers we mow right up to the trees and use composted green waste to keep the soil moist.

'We're also members of Nature's Choice, the farm management scheme unique to Tesco that sets environmental standards, including how to protect and encourage wildlife. And we belong to the Organic Farmers and Growers, the Soil Association and Assured Produce.

'I see myself as a custodian of the countryside and not using harsh chemicals has the benefit of preventing harm to wildlife or the habitat. Now there is a far greater diversity of species on the farm, including wild plants, ladybirds, badgers and hedgehogs.

'Farming organically is vital for maintaining the soil and doesn't destroy the land. I want to hand my business over to a fourth generation. Being organic is allowing me to maintain their legacy.'

THE MUM

Lynoa Cattanach, 34, from Fife, author of *Teach Yourself Green Parenting*, is mum to Isla, 6, and is expecting her second child

'Becoming a mum was a turning point in my life. I want the best for my children and being a parent made me think about the future and the mess we're leaving them with.

'If we don't act now they will have less green space, difficulty growing food as well as climate changes. Social problems too, such as obesity and asthma, all look set to increase and they stem from our lifestyle habits so we can't afford to just sit back and do nothing.

'But I became frustrated by the lack of information there was out there for young mums on a budget. So together with another mum I launched *BabyGro* magazine, to introduce new mums to the concept of being green.

'It's distributed into maternity units across the UK and the idea is to make it easy for busy mums, as they have all the information there for them. It's free, easily accessible and covers everything

from breastfeeding and chemical-free nappies to money-saving tips and how to shop for ethical brands at supermarkets such as Tesco.

'The last thing I want to do is preach to people or tell them they're bad parents. It's about how they can make quick and easy lifestyle improvements.

'As a mum I feel responsible for making my children aware of how lucky we are in this country and helping them understand the importance of tidying up after ourselves. When I go to recycle I take my daughter with me so she can see for herself the bottles going in the bins. And we do the gardening together, we've got containers with peas growing in them – by setting a good example you can make an impact on your children.

'When I had my daughter I was scared by how much catching up we have to do in terms of being green in the UK. Now I have a second child on the way I'm determined to create good habits for my kids. I want them to be able to have peace of mind in the future.'

Teach Yourself Green Parenting is available at www.hoddereducation.co.uk



'Organic farming doesn't harm the natural habitat'