



# Media Release

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**photo opportunity – see below**

## **CHILDREN TO CHEW OVER COMPOSTING QUESTION NATIONAL COMPOSTING WEEK – 2/8 MAY 2004**

Children from Hookstone Chase Primary School are joining forces with Harrogate Borough Council and RHS Garden Harlow Carr to chew over the benefits of composting. Pupils will be taking part in the Royal Horticultural Society's 'Compostable Lunch Challenge' during this year's National Composting Week.

Simon Johnson, Head of Environment at Harrogate Borough Council's who is spearheading a waste minimisation and recycling project, said: "This is an inspiring challenge and I am grateful to the Royal Horticultural Society for letting us work with them on this educational project. The most efficient way of reducing waste is not to produce waste in the first place. All the children will be encouraged to think carefully about finishing all their lunch but at the same time to think about what their lunch boxes contain."

"When we think about composting, we tend to consider that this restricts us to garden or kitchen waste. But as these young pupils will discover, many lunch containers produce permanent waste. This might be the bottle their drink comes in or the packaging surrounding their sandwiches. These young composting challengers will be encouraged to think about bringing their drinks in a plastic bottle or a flask, either of which can be taken home and used again. And wrapping their sandwiches in greaseproof or kitchen paper rather than plastic film will also help. The government has set waste recycling targets for us to reach. Our target for 2005 is 21%. We have been working hard to achieve our target of 14% set for 2003/2004."

The Royal Horticultural Society runs this challenge each year and all participating schools will receive a certificate recording the weight of their permanent waste. At the end of the year, the school that produces the least weight (per pupil) of permanent waste will receive a special prize. Locally, last year's winner was Western County Primary School.

The Compostable Lunch Challenge is offered as part of school visits to all four of the RHS Gardens where children are taught about how important plants and gardening are in our lives.

The council is also working with Brookside Nursery in Leeds Road, Harrogate and Strikes in Knaresborough to provide home composters at a reduced cost to the district's residents. They are available in two sizes and are on offer at just £11.95 and £15.95 (usual cost is £39.95 and £49.95). ENDS

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: Tuesday, 4 May 2004 at 1.00 pm in the Study Centre, RHS Garden Harlow Carr, Crag Lane, Harrogate when the children will be eating 'all' their lunch and composting the little bit that's left.**

**FURTHER INFORMATION is available from Simon Johnson on 01423 556845 and Allison Williams, Marketing Manager, Harlow Carr Gardens on 01423 565418 or email at [allisonwilliams@rhs.org.uk](mailto:allisonwilliams@rhs.org.uk).**