

Design a Greener Future

Alfies recently ran a competition for illustrators and designers to come up with an iconic design for a canvas bag to promote the Antiques are Green campaign. On display you will see the short listed entries and the winning design. The exclusively designed, limited edition bags are on sale at Alfies Reception.

The Antiques are Green campaign was set up last year by Nigel Worboys to create awareness among consumers of the green credentials of antiques and their "sustainable, reusable, and re-saleable" nature. This year dealers and antique organisations commissioned a report that revealed an antique chest of drawers has a carbon footprint 16 times lower than that of a modern equivalent.

In recent years mass production and mass consumerism has changed not only the face of industry, but the way in which people perceive material goods, leading to fast fashion and a throwaway culture. Huge amounts of clothing, furniture and other goods end up in landfill sites every year.

However more and more people are becoming conscious of their personal footprint on the environment and seeking purchases with longevity, a sense of identity, and with quality over quantity being a considerable factor in choice. Buying something that has been made to last, that oozes style and individuality, and is kinder on the environment is something to be taken seriously. Buying and collecting vintage and antique is not only an ethical way to shop, but it ticks all the right boxes in the style stakes.

It is a proven fact that antiques are better for the environment, from the very day they were made and throughout their entire lifetime. Not only are antiques usually hand-made but their materials would have been locally sourced.

"Buying antiques reduces landfill, reduces carbon emissions and reduces consumption of new goods from abroad. The antiques trade is the oldest recycling business in the world and the ultimate in terms of preserving our heritage for future generations." Nigel Worboys, Antiques are Green Campaign.

The lifespan of a vintage piece also significantly outweighs that of a newly bought mass produced product. When you buy vintage you are recycling as well as extending the life of the object. Antique and vintage is often passed down through generations or restored and sold on when no longer wanted, rather than being discarded. The life story and heritage of each piece could be hundreds of years old, with different owners, locations, stories, scandals, and could include major historical events. This in itself is part of the excitement of collecting antiques and vintage and is why restoring, recycling, make do and mending is definitely the green way to consume.

Support the Antiques are Green Campaign and read the full report online at www.antiquesaregreen.org