We have been collecting for our local schools for about 14 years now and we regularly receive about 1 tonne per collection which means Mortimer and surrounds have put into Bag2school bags over 42 tonnes of unwanted clothing over the years.  Although this is wonderful for fundraising for your schools we, Rebecca, Peta, and Jo, would like to encourage everyone to consider other options in addition to Bag2school.  We are concerned that as a village we are making things just a bit too easy to throw clothing away in order to buy more. We would ask that you first consider whether your clothing can be passed on to family or friends or via the Buy Nothing Mortimer Facebook group or even whether items can be repurposed.

Many people are concerned like us about there are clothing donations go when they leave our village and so below is a statement from the Bag2school organisation, which is reassuring that we are not contributing to the clothing mountain in Africa but equally well we are still consuming and discarding far far too much as a nation and we would like on our own small way and, with your help, to take steps to reduce, reuse or recycle.

**Where do all our collections go to?  Statement from Bag2school**

\*The company that operates Bag 2 School has been in the textile recycling and used clothing business for more than 30 years.

\* More than 1 million Tonnes of textiles are discarded in the U. K. every year. To put that in perspective that equates to 1,000 40-foot trucks a week, or 50,000 a year. And that’s just the U. K. Other countries discard a similar amount per head of population as we do.

\* By far the vast majority of this discarded clothing, whether given to charity or Bag 2 School, is sold to countries all around the World, including in Africa, Asia and South America, (indeed it would be difficult to name a country that doesn’t import second-hand clothing), where it is sold for reuse as clothing. Only a very small percentage of discarded clothing is sold in U. K. second-hand shops.

\* We have an extensive network of trusted sorting companies, with whom we have been working for decades. These companies sort the goods into about 500 different grades. They handle the clothing we send them correctly and responsibly. They are located in the U. K., Europe, and the Middle East.

\* 75% of the clothing Bag 2 School collects goes for reuse as clothing, the remaining 25% goes to be recycled and is used as padding for furniture, remade into new garments, and used as industrial wipers.

\* The second-hand clothing business supplies good quality clothing to millions of people all around the World, including the retro and Vintage shops in the U. K. It also creates hundreds of thousands of jobs. In fact, most countries in the World have second-hand clothing shops and markets. It would be difficult to think of a country that doesn’t buy second-hand clothing.

**To ensure that we are not contributing to the clothing mountain here are some reminders of Bag2school essentials - apologies as most of these are obvious**

\*All items you donate must be in good condition, shoes tied together, socks as pairs and all donations must be clean

\* Please keep the bag and contents dry as wet clothing is unsellable and will just be discarded or used as rags  (we know this is tricky with our great British weather)

\*No hard toys - please put these on BuyNothing Mortimer or take them to a local charity shop

\* You can either recycle the outer bag at the local supermarkets or just pop it inside the bag with your donation and it will be recycled by bag2school

**Things we can take if you can find no other purpose for them:**

Men's, ladies and children's clothing, paired shoes, handbags and hats, bags, scarves and ties, jewelry, lingerie, socks, belts, soft toys, household linen, curtains, towels, bed sheets, pillowcases, and duvet covers

**Items we cannot take - and suggestions of alternative recycling and reuse organisations:**

\*Duvets and Blankets, Pillows and Cushions - try local vets, Guidedogs or Buy Nothing Mortimer, or Dunelm (at Calcot)

\*Carpets, rugs, and mats (including bath, shower, and toilet mats) – Buy Nothing Mortimer or Kerbside Textile recycling

\*School uniforms - try the schools which often have a second-hand sale for these items

\*Corporate clothing and workwear - check with your employer about reuse or recycling

\*Textile off cuts, yarns, or threaded material - try Buy Nothing Mortimer or WBC kerbside textile recycling

\*Soiled, painted, ripped or wet clothing, if they cannot be cleaned or repaired and reused at any other the above thenWBC kerbside textile recycling

**Volunteers**…..We are always looking out for volunteers to give us a hand with Bags2school, particular parents of children who benefit from the money raised for the schools. The jobs are not onerous – a route delivering bag2school bags through doors can be done with children - and the road side collections of full bags take about 45 mins and could be even shorter with more helpers. Please email Peta if you think you can help us.(Petalclark@gmail.com)