SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT



SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT 2026 IMPACT REPORT

LOCAL SOLUTIONS, LASTING IMPACT

In 2026, Westport chose action over intention.

OUR MISSION

Leading the way as we inspire and equip the community to act now on sustainability.

A LETTER FROM OUR CO-DIRECTORS



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Sustainable Westport is built on a simple premise: lasting change starts locally. Our role is to bring residents, businesses, schools, community organizations, and Town leaders together around practical solutions, and to turn broad sustainability goals into everyday actions that make Westport healthier and more resilient.

In 2026, that work produced real results. We brought new water refill stations to the Compo Beach basketball courts and Winslow Park, giving residents and visitors an easy alternative to single-use plastic bottles. We worked with local restaurants to reduce unnecessary packaging and find better ways to manage food waste. These restaurants are returning oyster shells to Long Island Sound and donating excess food to those who need it. And we led community conversations about microplastics, bringing new attention to an issue that affects all of us.

Each of these projects reflects how we approach our work: identify a practical opportunity, bring the right partners to the table, and make the sustainable choice the easy one. Our results this year show that this approach works, and that Westport is ready to rethink familiar habits and embrace new solutions.

We could not do this alone. We are grateful to the participating organizations and restaurants, the Town of Westport and, especially, the volunteers and supporters who give their time, resources, and ideas to this work.

In 2027, we will build on this progress by strengthening our partnerships, expanding the initiatives that delivered results, and finding new ways to involve more of the community.

Thank you for being part of Sustainable Westport. We look forward to what we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

With gratitude,

Johanna Martell and Gately Ross

Co-Directors, Sustainable Westport

2026 BY THE NUMBERS

Your support, made visible

A year measured not in good intentions but in things the whole town can see, use and count.

2

ADA-COMPLIANT HYDRATION STATIONS

Water-bottle filling stations purchased and installed at Compo Beach basketball courts and Winslow Park.

500

REUSABLE BOTTLES GIVEN AWAY

Metal bottles handed out with Parks & Rec at Kickoff to Summer, Camp Compo, Summer Stroll, flag football and travel soccer games.

100

WESTPORT HOMES AUDITED

Homes that received a HES audit through HeatSmart Westport to date, each receiving an average of $1,000 in products and services.

100%

COMMUNITY FUNDED

Zero Town dollars. Every result in this report was made possible by private generosity.

5,000+

SOCIAL FOLLOWERS

Newsletter subscribers: 2,000+

~1000

EVENT ATTENDEES

Across First Mondays, screenings, workshops, forums, and presentations.

WHERE THE WORK REACHED

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE	Two hydration stations open at Compo basketball courts and Winslow Park thanks to our $20,000 gift to the Town of Westport. Two more stations fully funded, at Burying Hill Beach and Grace K. Salmon Park, pending Town approval.
WASTE AND PLASTICS	UnPlastic Westport, LobsterFest food waste diversion, Mattress Collection and Play it Forward.
LOCAL BUSINESS	Six inaugural Restaurant Champions, lent hands-on support to eliminate plastic, compost, source responsibly and save energy.
HEALTH AND SCIENCE	Plastic People documentary screening + expert panel discussion.
YARDS AND WILDLIFE	Your Yard, Our Climate events, including collaborative workshops on increasing biodiversity with native plants and eliminating pesticide use.
HOMES AND ENERGY	HeatSmart Westport with the Town and PACE, from audits to heat pumps.
YOUTH & TEENS	Launched Student Liaison program with Staples and GFA; partnered with student-led groups and presented to high school students.
CIVIC LIFE	Advised the First Selectman, Town commissions and departments; hosted candidate forums and debates; co-sponsored Library events.

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS TO WESTPORT

Sustainability is how Westport protects what it values

Westport's strengths are well known: exceptional schools, a deep tradition in the arts, a shoreline of rare beauty, thriving local businesses, accomplished professionals and families who invest deliberately in their children's futures. Each of these is tied directly to the health of the local environment. Our work in 2026 was designed to protect and enrich them.

ACHIEVEMENTS THAT DEFINED 2026

What we built together





WE BUILT

Refill stations, on the ground and in public use

Sustainable Westport gifted $20,000 to the Town of Westport for two ADA-compliant drinking fountains and bottle-filling stations, at the Compo Beach basketball courts and Winslow Park. At Compo, a jug filler now serves Camp Compo all summer. At Winslow, the station includes a bowl for dogs and a plaque honoring Sherry Jagerson, a longtime Westport environmental advocate.

Burying Hill Beach and Grace K. Salmon Park locations are now fully funded and moving through Town approval. Old Mill Beach, PJ Romano Field, Town Farm Ball Complex and Wakeman Fields are next.

It is not just a water refill station. It is a step toward zero waste and a healthier community.

Why it matters. Turning generosity into everyday impact. Campers, athletes and dog walkers now use a free public amenity that eliminates the need for single-use plastic every single day.

INSTALLED & OPEN

- Compo Beach
- Winslow Park

FUNDED & PENDING

- Burying Hill Beach
- Grace K. Salmon Park

UPCOMING

- Old Mill Beach
- PJ Romano Field
- Town Farm Ball Complex
- Wakeman Fields

UNPLASTIC WESTPORT
BROUGHT TO YOU BY SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT

500

WE LAUNCHED A MOVEMENT

UnPlastic Westport, one swap at a time

In 2026 we launched UnPlastic Westport, a year-long, town-wide effort to reduce single-use plastic and make lower-plastic choices easier for every household. Each month we tackled plastic where Westporters meet it most: kitchens, pantries, bathrooms, backyards, summer activities, back-to-school shopping and the weekly grocery run.

With Westport Parks & Rec, we put **500 metal reusable bottles** into the hands of families at Kickoff to Summer, Summer Stroll, Camp Compo, PAL flag football and Westport travel soccer games. Our message all year: *progress, not perfection.*

Why it matters. Our over-reliance on plastic is now understood as an environmental and public health concern, from plastic pollution in the Long Island Sound to the microplastics and chemicals found in our bodies. UnPlastic Westport gives families practical, manageable swaps and attainable ways to change behaviors so that we can collectively reduce our use of plastic.

WE CHANGED BUSINESS PRACTICES

Westport Restaurant Champions

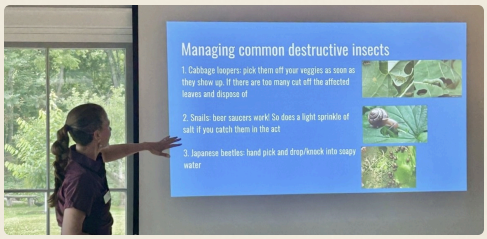
We don't just celebrate sustainable businesses. We help them become more sustainable. Our team works side by side with restaurants to analyze their operations to see where they can make improvements to their sustainability footprint. The Restaurant Champions program recognizes Westport food businesses that incorporate responsible waste management, sustainable sourcing and energy efficiency into their operations and comply with the town's single-use plastic ordinance. On Earth Day we named our first six Champions: **Kneads Bakery, Café & Mill, MOMU, The Whelk, Massi Co. and Allium Eatery.** Together they:

1. Swapped plastic takeout lids for paper **(The Whelk, Massi Co.)**
2. Replaced plastic water bottles with glass **(Allium Eatery)**
3. Returned oyster shells to restore habitat in Long Island Sound **(The Whelk)**
4. Composted food scraps and donated leftover baked goods to Food Rescue **(Kneads)**
5. Switched to paper and compostable serviceware **(MOMU)**

Why it matters. Dining is part of Westport's identity and economy. Restaurant Champions prove that sustainability and great hospitality reinforce each other and go hand in hand, and they give residents a way to reward good practices with their patronage.







WE EQUIPPED OUR COMMUNITY TO ACT

Complex science, made local and accessible

In April, we hosted a free screening of *Plastic People: The Hidden Crisis of Microplastics* at Greens Farms Academy, followed by a panel discussion featuring Soma Barsen of the Yale School of Public Health.

Your Yard, Our Climate programming continued with a focus on promoting biodiversity, improving soil health and pesticide reduction. In partnerships with Wakeman Town Farm, Wild Ones and Westport Pollinator Pathway, we hosted multiple workshops including *Pests Out, Pollinators In*, *Native Seed Ball-Making* and *Winter Seed Sowing*.

As a coastal community, the health of the Long Island Sound is of utmost importance to Sustainable Westport. In early 2026, we joined the Town's Conservation Department in bringing data-driven science to life through two programs at the Westport Library, *The Real Impact of Climate Change on Connecticut Shores* with James O'Donnell, and *Forever Chemicals in Connecticut's Coastal Waters: A Community Conversation on Pollution and Climate Change* with Dick Harris.

Why it matters. We bring experts to our community to share scientific research, simplified, so families can make informed decisions about their health and the health of their environment.

WE HELPED RESIDENTS SAVE MONEY

HeatSmart Westport

With the Town of Westport and People's Action for Clean Energy (PACE), we grew HeatSmart Westport, a pathway to more energy efficient homes. It starts with a Home Energy Solutions (HES) audit. 100 Westport residents have completed an audit to date, each receiving on average about $1,000 in products and services and saving on average $70 to $100 a year on energy bills. That is roughly $100,000 in products and services delivered to Westport homes and up to $10,000 a year in combined savings.[1]

Why it matters. HeatSmart can help Westporters save as CT faces rising energy costs, making homes more comfortable and cutting emissions across the whole town.

100
AUDITS

$1,000
PER HOME

$100,000
DELIVERED

$10,000
A YEAR SAVED

More ways we showed up in 2026

LOBSTERFEST

2,000+ lbs of food waste diverted from the incinerator.

MATTRESS COLLECTION

50 mattresses kept out of the waste stream and recycled.

PLAY IT FORWARD

2nd annual soccer equipment collection to give items a second life in the community.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Keeping Westporters informed about environmental issues and proposed legislation at the State level.

FIRST MONDAYS

Monthly gatherings where neighbors meet, ask questions and swap ideas.













[1] Eversource, Home Energy Solutions: https://www.eversource.com/residential/save-money-energy/energy-efficiency-programs/home-energy-solutions

A SOUND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Independent, accountable and built on community support

Sustainable Westport is a fully independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Many residents are surprised to learn that we receive no Town funding. Our advisory work for the Town, our programs and our public infrastructure projects are made possible by individuals, families, sponsors and local organizations.

That independence is a strength. It lets us move quickly, bring partners together, give candid guidance to Town leaders and direct every gift toward results the community can see.



+10%

ANNUAL GIVING

Growth in giving from Nov. 15, 2025, to Nov. 14, 2026, over the same period the year before.



+112%

EARTH MONTH APPEAL

Inspired by our water station initiative, community giving more than doubled around our Earth Month appeal.



44%

FIRST TIME DONORS

Nearly half our donors were new supporters.



$243

AVERAGE GIFT

Up from about $188 in 2025.

Every Gift = A More Sustainable Westport

WHAT YOUR GIFT ACCOMPLISHED IN 2026

Our hydration stations are the most visible proof that donations produced results. Donations to Sustainable Westport this year funded the organization's broader capacity to solve problems: the research, partnerships, programs and public advocacy that turned an idea into a station, a policy into practice and a conversation into lasting change.

OUR 2026 COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

$10,000 AND ABOVE

Howard & Christina Blaustein · James & Dawn Henry

$1,000 TO $9,999

Anonymous
Pippa & David Ader
Robert Christoph Jr
Matthew & Gery Grove
Jillian Klaff
Wade & Swapna Podlich
Rhimes Foundation
Westport Rotary Club
The Schwab Family
Claudia P. Shaum
Don & Dawn Sullivan
Westport Garden Club

$250 TO $999

Paula Argosh
Peter Boyd
Ross & Janie Burkhardt
Alex Cohen & Family
Ive Covaci
Melissa Ellis
Rob & Mary Feakins
Stacy Fowle
Luisa Francoeur
Jenifer Gorin
Katharine Graves
Rosemary Halstead
Dr. Mitchell Lester & Jill Greenberg
Edward Martell
Soledad Matteozzi
John McCarthy
Anne & William Palmer
Robert Pravder & Gail Berritt
John Rountree
Patricia Sheppard
Christina Surtees
Carol & John Waxman

UP TO $249

Anonymous
CarolAnne Ances
Katie Augustyn
Susie Benton
Clair Benmosche
Ken Bernhard
Verity Blackburn
Amee Borys
Lori Cochran
Joy Deignan
Robert Dranitzke
Bonnie Edelman
Janice Egan
Nicholas Eisenberger
Raphael Elkind & Melissa Newman
Andrea Feldman
Thomas Fiffer
Jonathn Francis
Eva Grundy
Donna Hannay
Bill Harmer
Alex Harvey
Arlene Healy
Jonathan & Amy Hochhauser
Linda Hudson
Wendy Jagerson Teleki
Eloida & Steve James
Diane & Rady Johnson
Merritt Juliano
Nancy Kail
Phil Kann
Cathy Knipper
David Koch
Eva Kornreich
Barry Kresh
Haley Lieberman
Paul Lobdell
William Lloyd
Richard Lowenstein
Nicole Luciani
Elizabeth Magnuson
Lucia Marion
Cletus Mathurin
Dede McDowell
Lisa Mezoff
Emily Mikesell
Liz Milwe
Robert Mitchell
Allison Monson
Jerid O'Connell
Vanessa Odenbach
Cornelia Olsen
Maeke Paul
Peter & Barbara Powell
Jen Reed
Brandeleyn Romanek
Shelley Ross
Jean Schluter
Kristin Schneeman
Joseph Scordato & Karen Wendell
Eiko Seevers
Jennifer Seymour
Alex Sherman
Cynthia Shumate
Jessica Stauder
Jessica Talley
Joel Treisman
Jeff & Pat Wieser



In 2026, Westport learned it could refill a bottle instead of buying one, choose a Restaurant Champion, get a home energy audit, protect pollinators, understand the science of microplastics and hear what candidates will do about climate resilience.

Westport has always been a town that builds what it believes in. Thank you for building a Sustainable Westport with us.