

## The man who lives without money

**Mark Boyle gave up using cash over a year ago and loves his new lifestyle.**

Jessica Salter *The Telegraph* 18 Aug 2010

Mark Boyle, 31, gave up using money in November 2008. He lives in a caravan that he got from Freecycle ([uk.freecycle.org](http://uk.freecycle.org)), which is parked at an organic farm near Bristol, where Boyle volunteers three days a week. He grows his own food, has a wood-burning stove and produces electricity from a solar panel (it cost £360 before the experiment started). He has a mobile phone for incoming calls only and a solar-powered laptop. Boyle, who has been vegan for six years, set up the Freeconomy in 2007 ([justfortheLoveofit.org](http://justfortheLoveofit.org)), an online network that encourages people to share skills or possessions and now has 17,000 members. [The Moneyless Man: A Year of Freeeconomic Living](#) (Oneworld Publications, £10.99) is out now.

It all started in a pub. My friend and I were talking about all the problems in the world, such as sweatshops, environmental destruction, factory farms, animal testing, wars over resources. I realised they were all, in their own way, connected to money.

I decided to give up cash. I sold my houseboat in Bristol and gave up my job at an organic food company. I made a list of everything I bought and tried to figure out which I could get in another way. For toothpaste I use a mixture of cuttlefish bone and wild fennel seeds. Things like iPods you just have to knock off the list, but birds in

the trees around my kitchen have become my new iPod.

Everything takes more time and effort in a moneyless world. Handwashing my clothes in a sink of cold water, using laundry liquid made by boiling up nuts on my rocket stove, can take two hours, instead of half an hour using a washing machine.

It was meant to be just for a year but I enjoy the lifestyle so much that I'm just going to keep living like this. I've never been happier or fitter.

I had a very normal childhood. I think at first my parents wondered what on earth I was doing. But now they totally support me and they say that they may even try it themselves.

Sometimes it is frustrating trying to socialise with no money. I grew up in Northern Ireland where it's a show of manliness to buy your mates the first round. But I invite them back to my caravan instead to have homemade cider around the campfire.

I am single at the moment, but because of the book and my blog a few women seem interested in me. Just being a vegan cuts down the number of women I'm compatible with, never mind being moneyless. I'll be lucky if there's one woman in the whole country who wants to give up cash for life – and I might not even fancy her.