

The SmartBunker

After inventing it to help his mother, Niall Greenan's SmartBunker is now sold all over the UK and Ireland and has had over three million views on social media...



Greenans winning at The Green Apple Awards

The concept behind the Smart Bunker is simple and...well...smart. It's an innovative storage bunker with a spring-loaded side lever which releases stacked product at the bottom of the container, where, for example, a bucket can be placed instead of having to use a shovel or scoop. The SmartBunker offers a simple solution to an age-old problem and it was invented by an ordinary man who had an extraordinarily genius, yet simple idea. Niall originally designed the product to help his mum Sheila.

Niall explains: "My Mother, who suffers from arthritis, was struggling to fill a coal bucket from her coal storage bunker. When the bunker was full, it was difficult to shovel coal out due to the weight from above. When it was empty it was difficult to gather coals which were scattered or had accumulated at the back of the bunker. I designed the very first SmartBunker and the benefits soon became obvious as the coal was easy to store, stayed dry and was straightforward to dispense."

LIGHTBULB MOMENT

A bricklayer by trade, Niall suffered an injury and was no longer able to carry out his work so he needed to think of another way to earn a living. After going back to school and educating himself, Niall found the idea for The SmartBunker just came to him. He said: "I used an upside down lamp shade and fixed a road cone to the underside of it. I placed a steel frame inside with a handle and a spring attached, filled the lamp shade with coal and placed the bucket



**Greenans Products Limited, 3 Dundrinne Rise,
Castlewellan, Co. Down BT31 9LY**

Tel: 028 4377 0845

www.thesmartbunker.co.uk

Email: sales@hesmartbunker.co.uk

**The SmartBunker
can be purchased for**

£199

**(inc. VAT) from
thesmartbunker.co.uk**



under the cone. When I pulled the handle it, filled the bucket. I then developed a prototype and began selling it to friends and family, I have now sold thousands of units all over Ireland and the UK."

The best ideas are often the most simplest of ones and the beauty of The SmartBunker is that it can be used for many other purposes as well as coal, for instance, salt, grit, wood pellets, animal feed and rice.

OFF TO MARKET

"There was a lot of work behind the scenes to get The SmartBunker to market," recalls Niall. Thankfully, a stint on Dragon's Den Ireland raised his profile hugely as did an appearance on the UK version of the show where he promoted the product in the wood pellet market. A few awards further cemented his reputation and boosted his sales so these are positive times for the Castlewellan man, his wife and his four children as the popularity of Niall's product soars. Ultimately, though it is the fact that this product can really help people with disability or mobility issues, that makes it stand out. Niall, 43, adds: "The SmartBunker can benefit all walks of life from the young and old and disabled making life easier to heat their homes should it be coal or wood pellets."

And is Niall's mum delighted with her new found fame on Facebook? "No, she is not happy," laughs Niall, "she has over three million views but is complaining because she didn't have her hair done. I replied, 'Ma - you were filling a bucket of coal!'"

As a problem solver by nature, Niall is now working on other invention prototypes, so watch this space!



Niall Greenan is taking his product all over the world



The SmartBunker offers a simple solution to an age-old problem and can really help people with disabilities or mobility issues



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