

Plastic Free Birmingham Inquiry

Information Pack - Contents

Page No.	Item
1.	Session Plan
2.	Birmingham Friends of the Earth – Submission – ‘Working to make Birmingham a Plastic Free City’
10.	Plastic Free Moseley – 1. Surfers Against Sewage - Toolkit for Businesses 2. Surfers Against Sewage – Toolkit for Communities
41.	About ecobirmingham
42.	Birmingham City Council Procurement – How the City Council can eliminate the use of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) within its supply chain
45.	Birmingham City Council – Place Directorate a) Responses to City Council Motion on Plastics from Place Directorate b) Events Guide Extract
56.	Background Information: 1. Birmingham City Council – Property Services 2. Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce – Response to Inquiry 3. Leeds by Example

Sustainability & Transport O&S Committee
Birmingham City Council

Plastic Free Birmingham Inquiry

Thursday 14th February 2019
Committee Room 2, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BB
1000-1205 hours

Purpose: A roundtable discussion on how the Council can work with businesses, stakeholders and communities to make a significant contribution to reducing the amount of single use plastics in the city including consideration of future plans and targets.

Time (approx.)	
10:00 – 10:05	Introduction by Chair, Cllr Liz Clements – Purpose and Objectives of Inquiry and today's session
10:05 – 10:20	Libby Harris and John Newson, Birmingham Friends of the Earth – <i>How can the City Council better support businesses, residents and other stakeholders to eliminate single use plastics where possible (e.g. alternative options, best practice from elsewhere) and how can BFOE help support the City Council in its ambition to become 'plastic free'. Are there any further challenges on the horizon that the City should be aware of?</i>
10:20 – 10:35	Ben Lee, Plastic Free Moseley – <i>work with businesses and the community in Moseley on reducing single use plastics and reducing plastic waste</i>
10:35 – 10:50	Jeanette Wong and Tom Pell, The Clean Kilo Supermarket – <i>sharing good practice and initiatives in eliminating plastic waste in the use of food packaging as the city's first supermarket offering goods free of plastic packaging</i>
10:50 – 11:05	Michael Addison, Director, ecobirmingham – <i>'Refill Birmingham' campaign and sustainable initiatives planned in the city</i>
11:05 – 11:20	Darren Share, Assistant Director, Waste Management, BCC – <i>the City Council's waste strategy 2016-2040 and examples of City Council schemes and plans to work with partners, businesses, residents and other stakeholders</i>
11:20 – 11:35	Haydn Brown, Procurement, BCC – <i>understanding the work the City Council is doing to encourage all businesses with which the Council has contracts to support the banning of single-use plastics in their place of work and consider the possibility of phasing out of single-use plastics in the awarding of new contracts where this is relevant and proportionate.</i>
11:30 – 11:45	Chris Neville, Acting Director, Regulation and Enforcement, BCC - <i>Enforcement and regulatory powers in relation to the City Council's work with businesses on reducing single use plastic and encouraging use of alternatives including using recycling and re-use of materials where possible.</i>
11:45 – 12:00	Neil Carney– Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games – <i>Understanding how the 2022 Commonwealth Games will feature sustainability as a key theme and how the City Council will work with the LOC and Games partners to minimise the use of single use plastic items and promote recycling and re-use alternatives wherever possible.</i>
12:00 -12:05	Closing Statement and Next Steps – Chair, Cllr Liz Clements

Evidence for
Sustainability & Transport Overview & Scrutiny Committee
“Working to make Birmingham a Plastic Free City”
Submission by Birmingham Friends of the Earth, February 2019

Birmingham Friends of the Earth (BFoE) is an independent, non-party campaigning organisation which has been sustained by its members for over 40 years. BFoE is one of many groups nationally and internationally, all advocating the protection of the Earth, which the well-being of this generation and of future generations depends upon.

Understanding the main source of the problem - what is the biggest source of single-use plastics?

Food and drinks packaging is probably the main source of single-use plastics, since people buy these items every day. It is a major component of household waste and or litter and is hence of concern to Birmingham City Council. Plastic bottles and food containers remain in the environment unless someone picks them up and they are likely to wash into rivers and eventually the sea. They take around 450 years to biodegrade. They break down into microfibers that get into the food chain and are then ultimately eaten by people.

A driving force behind the high demand for single-use plastic is the cultural problem of fast food for which there are a great many outlets in the city. Such food is often unhealthy and the containers and wrappings present a huge waste management problem that businesses are currently not paying to manage adequately.

It would be easier to regulate the supply side of the fast food industry rather than changing consumer behaviour in order to reduce and prevent the use of

plastic packaging by offering alternatives such as a cardboard boxes or greaseproof paper.

Identify the scale of the problem in Birmingham - what percentage of plastic is for single-usage and what percentage is collected for recycling and the most common causes of plastic waste in Birmingham.

Birmingham City Council has one of the lowest recycling rates in the country with just 21% of household waste being composted and recycled. Most is residual waste and has to be paid to dispose of in the monopoly contract with Veolia.

Analysis of the composition of residual waste at Tyseley plant has shown that X by weight is plastic, but plastic being light, the volume will be much higher. Birmingham's low recycling rate is a cause for concern as most of the materials which could be recycled at the kerbside are ending up in the incinerator or in landfill.

Another contributor to Birmingham's low household recycling rate is the lack of recycling facilities in many flats and apartment blocks. If recycling facilities were improved for all residential properties then recycling rates would increase dramatically.

A concern alongside the low household recycling rate is the high number of single-use plastics which are being disposed of through takeaways and restaurants which are not being recycled.

Examine what has worked/not worked to tackle the problem.

Birmingham no longer gives out millions of bin bags to householders but distributes reusable bins.

Birmingham's current collection scheme is not working. This is demonstrated by 79% of household refuse being either incinerated or sent to landfill. Both of these disposal methods cost Birmingham money.

Residents do not understand what they should put in the recycling bin or what happens to it and have often given up trying to comply. The 'Zero Heroes' campaign is not specific enough and its name suggests that you have to be a hero to recycle in Birmingham.

In the past, Birmingham City Council trialled an incentive scheme using nectar points. This proved successful, but it was later dropped. A similar incentive scheme would help incentivise recycling.

Birmingham City Council through its purchasing power could eliminate single-use packaging. For example, through policies such as a ban on black plastic which mechanical recycling separation cannot recognise.

The decline of plastic waste for the above reasons will very much impact the calorific value of rubbish burned at Tyseley, which mostly comes from the plastic items, and will bring forward the day when it will close. Much of the residual waste in Birmingham is food waste, for which we have submitted a petition calling for separate collection.

Identify best practice examples from elsewhere and what can we learn from them and also examples of good practice already happening in Birmingham.

There are some examples of good practice in Birmingham. Good practice is demonstrated by The Clean Kilo¹, a zero waste supermarket in Birmingham. Instead of buying food stuffs and cleaning products in single-use packaging, the supermarket packages items in reusable containers or the customer can bring along their own containers. This has proved a popular and sustainable business, showing that much plastic is unnecessary.

Birmingham University successfully encouraged use of reusable coffee cups.

¹ Clean Kilo <https://www.thecleankilo.co.uk>

Wetherspoons has switched to paper straws, no condiment sachets etc, while cutting out disposable coffee cups. Some retailers, such as Boston Tea Party, also don't use disposable coffee cups.

Plymouth's Waterfront District has been awarded Plastic Free Communities status². Plymouth council has committed to implementing a ban on single-use plastics by 2020 and by September 2019, all Council buildings will go single-use plastic free. Furthermore, an Environmental Assessment will be required by event holders for events that take place on Council owned land showing how single-use plastics will be eliminated or reduced.

Stroud District council has been asked to advise the government due to its high and impressively accelerated recycling rate. Birmingham could learn from their collection system.

We welcome any move for Birmingham City Council to adopt plastic minimisation in their procurement strategy. Birmingham City Council could implement a ban on single-use plastics in all council run/owned facilities and put into place policies to ensure businesses undertake an environmental assessment as part of granting a business licence.

The Commonwealth Games 2022 provides an ideal opportunity for Birmingham City Council to be a leading authority in tackling the use of single-use plastic. The City Council could make use of the planning and procurement phases to ensure the Commonwealth Games is plastic free. The last Games in Australia had exemplary policies about waste, which should be followed in Birmingham's case³.

Identify on-going or emerging Government consultations/strategies

²Plymouth <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/environmentandpollution/plastics>

³Gold Coast <https://gc2018.com/about/sustainability>

and understand the future implications for the amount of plastic going into the waste stream e.g. consultation on eliminating single-use plastics, consultation on deposit scheme for plastic bottles and anticipated upcoming new national waste strategy.

Almost all plastic drinks bottles can be recycled. In the UK less than 50% of plastic bottles are recycled and only 7% of those are actually turned into new bottles.

During 2018, Birmingham Friends of the Earth ran a 'Don't Lose Your Bottle' campaign, with a petition sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment, calling for the introduction of a national Deposit Return Scheme on plastic bottles in England. The petition gained support from a high number of Birmingham residents, along with Councillors and MPs, and a UK-wide scheme is to be introduced⁴. A survey of deposit schemes across Europe has found they generally recover 80-90% of bottles and cans for recycling⁵.

A pilot by Iceland the supermarket in Wolverhampton has been a big success refunding 10p per bottle via reverse vending machines⁶.

Deposit return will have a big impact on waste, litter and recycling with very real savings to local authorities⁷ from which BCC should be planning to benefit.

The introduction of the 5p charge on plastic carrier bags has dramatically reduced the number of single-use bags by an estimated 15 billion since 2015. The success of the scheme has led to the government consulting on the possibility of increasing the charge to 10p and will extend this to all shops⁸.

⁴Deposit Return <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/deposit-return-scheme-in-fight-against-plastic>

⁵http://www.acrplus.org/images/technical-reports/2019_ACR_Deposit-refund_systems_in_Europe_Report.pdf

⁶Iceland <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/02/plastic-bottle-deposit-scheme-in-uk-proving-a-hit-with-shoppers>

⁷Benefits

https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/resources/KBT_Research_Report_Deposit_Refund_System_2017.pdf

⁸Carrier bags <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/extending-the-single-use-bags-charge/>

The Plastic PACT, a Wrap initiative, has brought together manufacturers, retailers, the UK Government and NGOs to tackle plastic waste and create a circular economy. The Plastic PACT aims to eliminate single-use packaging by 2025.

DEFRA's "Resources and Waste Strategy for England" strongly encourages separate food waste collection for use in anaerobic digestion⁹. This is the other side of food purchasing. We have submitted a petition calling for a food waste collection service in Birmingham like that in neighbouring Sandwell. All households in Wales have a separate food waste collection as part of the Zero Waste Wales strategy¹⁰. In Birmingham's household collection, nearly half of the waste in weight is food waste. Some commercial AD plants now accept food waste for free (at zero gate fees).

The City Council should be modelling the waste stream in Birmingham going forward as plastic declines and food waste is diverted. This decline will have an impact on the combustibility of waste in the Tyseley Incinerator. This means a date for the closure of the incinerator should be added to the council's waste strategy.

Explore the most effective/efficient waste management system to separate, collect and recycle plastics to increase recycling rates.

Some recycling systems put all plastic in bags, separated from other recycling. When there is a separate food waste collection in place, dry and non-smelling residual waste needs collection less frequently. The BFoE petition has asked BCC for this and many areas already do it, including Sandwell.

We also ask if there could be another pod in the current recycling bin that would allow us to separate the plastics.

More could be done in schools to indirectly change parental behaviour. BFoE have run a number of sessions in schools and these have been successful. Solihull is particularly good at environmental education.

⁹DEFRA strategy <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/resources-and-waste-strategy-for-england>

¹⁰Wales https://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/epq/waste_recycling/zerowaste/?lang=en

Explore possible incentives which encourage consumers to both avoid/prevent the use of plastic and to encourage higher levels of recycling for example by providing economic incentive for consumers to recycle plastic.

When residents pay council tax and get a weekly collection of rubbish free, there is no reward for recycling. In many countries, you pay for your rubbish but can recycle for free, for example in Ireland.

Of course, a deposit return on bottles would also work to boost recycling.

Explore the potential viable alternatives to the use of single use plastics and how can these be promoted widely.

Cardboard packaging for fast food can be single-use but biodegradable, and this would be a much better alternative to plastic.

What happens to the single use plastics could be far better communicated, as we find that many people are unaware of what happens after these plastics go into the bin.

Water refill stations around the city centre could be better advertised, and we know that Eco Birmingham are working hard on this. The Council could replace drinks vending machines on council property with water fountains, encouraging the use of reusable drinking containers. The council could then explore rewards and incentives for people who refill. Rewards could include money off swimming etc. They could also work with Severn Trent to promote the quality of Birmingham's water.

The Council could have a Directory outline for businesses to identify alternatives to plastic.

Explore ways of raising consumer awareness and reducing consumer confusion by clearer public communication and consumer messaging about plastic and about best-practice on recycling.

There could be much better information about what can and can't be recycled, and where things go. The current system can be confusing, leaving many people unsure what to do. Information could be circulated via an app, an

online video, instruction stickers on bins, posters on lamp posts. Likewise, recycling rules could be advertised on public transport. Recycling guides could also be included with any council correspondence, for example council tax bills.

Explore what can be done to reduce waste from single-use plastics from a regulatory enforcement standpoint.

First and foremost, the council could find out what other local authorities are doing, as many local authorities are already making great progress.

The council could consider making it a term on tenancy for businesses who already have to show waste disposal contracts, and this could be a good way of influencing takeaway restaurants. With better enforcement and increased fines, enforcement pays for itself. This could also include regulation of market stall holders who might be asked to use paper instead of plastic bags.

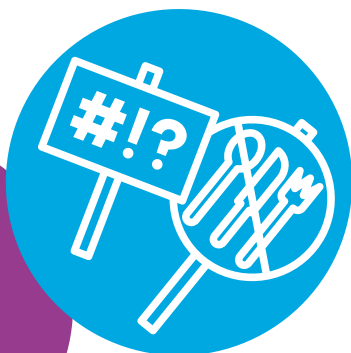
After banning single use plastics in council buildings, regular independent audits could be conducted. The council could then make these audits public to demonstrate best practice and set a good example for businesses and organisations across the city.

The 14 measures identified in the Council resolution to reduce plastic should all be acted upon. If any of them cannot be acted upon, they should give clear reasons as to why this hasn't been possible.

The findings of this Scrutiny committee on plastic waste should be added to the Council Waste Strategy.



BUSINESS TOOLKIT





WELCOME!

Welcome to your Plastic Free Communities Business Toolkit! First of all, thank you! If you're reading this it's because you've made a decision to remove single-use plastic from your business or organisation, or are seriously considering it.

Plastic pollution and tackling society's throwaway, excessive and unnecessary single-use culture has become a top priority for Surfers Against Sewage. From surfing to swimming, beach holidays to wildlife watching, plastic is now an inevitable and unwelcome part of the experience. Plastic pollution is also evident inland, blighting our lanes, paths and hedgerows and inevitably ending up in waterways.

Globally, we are producing nearly 300 million tonnes of plastic every year. Of that, it is estimated that up to 13 million tonnes of plastic leaks into the global marine environment annually. This has adverse implications for wildlife, the economy and human health.

Your business can help reduce plastic pollution in the environment. Reuse, recycle and find plastic-free options wherever possible.

How to use your Toolkit

This toolkit provides the information you need to make your business plastic-free.

Start fighting plastic waste and the pollution it causes by eliminating single-use plastic from your business and committing to alternatives. Remember that by banishing at least three avoidable single-use plastic items from your business you will also be helping your community to achieve Plastic Free accreditation.

1. Plastic Bottles



Plastic bottles last hundreds of years in the marine environment slowly breaking down into dangerous microplastic particles. Offer refillable alternatives.

2. Coffee Cups and Lids



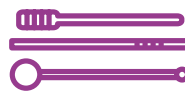
In the UK we throw away 7 million single-use coffee cups each day. Encourage customers to refill instead.

3. Plastic Bags



Plastic bags kill marine life through unintentional digestion or inhalation. Ban them from your business. Offer reusable paper, cotton or jute bags instead.

4. Plastic Straws and Stirrers



Used for only a few minutes, plastic straws are one of the top polluters of the marine environment. Offer paper alternatives instead.

5. Plastic Cutlery



Food and drink related plastic items make up one in every five pieces of litter. Stock washable cutlery or plastic-free alternatives.

6. Balloons



Don't use or sell balloons. They can entangle and kill marine wildlife.

Don't stop there! Think about eliminating plastic cups, bathroom plastics, 'on the go' plastic food packaging, condiment sachets and single-use promotional items.

BECOMING A PLASTIC FREE BUSINESS

Step One:

- Champion the plastic-free cause and register your business with a local Plastic Free Communities team if you have one.
- Complete an audit of your business. What single use plastics do you use?
- What have you already got rid of or replaced?
- What can you easily stop using and providing to customers?
- What are the things you will need to phase out more gradually?
- If you really can't do without some items, are there sustainable alternatives on the market?
- What are the things you feel you have no control over e.g. suppliers and how they provide/send goods?

Step Two:

Pick one item at a time, starting with the easiest. You know what will work for your business, so we leave those decisions to you. Our suggestions here are based on other businesses who have gone plastic free successfully. They include:

- Stop giving out straws and keep a small stock of paper straws in for those who really need them.
- Stop selling bottled water and offer a Refill Service instead. Could you join a Refill scheme in your local area?
- Encourage coffee refills by selling re-usable cups and offer a discount to people who use them. Brand them up and let everyone see what you are doing.
- Ban carrier bags and encourage customers to bring their own. Sell a jute or cotton bag for customers to use. Again, brand it up.
- Stop providing stirrers and put stainless steel spoons out for customers to use. Could they add sugar/sweetener in your shop?
- Stop providing milk sachets and provide a jug of milk for customers to use. Again can they add their milk while in your business?
- Stop giving out sachets and provide a sugar/sweetener shaker, glass bottles of sauce or sauce dispensers instead.
- Ban biscuits wrapped in plastic and opt for 'nude' biscuits.
- Use paper bags instead of plastic bags.
- Stop giving out serviettes as standard. Make sure the ones you do give out are fully compostable. Swap to washable serviettes for non-takeaway customers.

What Then?

There may be some single use items you need to phase out gradually and there may be some you can't do without. In this case look for sustainable alternatives, which are now widely available through regular suppliers. Ideas include:

- Swap plastic takeaway cutlery for wooden cutlery.
- Swap polystyrene or plastic food trays/boxes for home compostable bagasse or cardboard.
- Swap bubble wrap for collapsible cardboard protective packaging. Start up a bubble wrap swap with other businesses to re-use packaging.
- Encourage coffee refills to reduce the number of single use cups you give out/buy.
- Switch to glass bottles or canned drinks. Again widely available through suppliers.

If you are a service based business or office, think how can you encourage staff to go plastic free while at work.

- Ban plastic water bottles and disposable coffee cups from the building. Ask staff to use refill bottles and cups instead.
- Encourage plastic free lunches. Share food once a week to cut plastic ... and team build!
- Remove all avoidable, single-use-plastic food and drinks packaging.
- Replace single use tableware with re-useable items.
- Ensure appropriate recycling routes are available to capture plastic.
- Encourage staff to make sustainable food and drink packaging choices and incentivise a workplace recycling system.
- Avoid the use of and release of balloons at your events.
- Swap to milk in glass bottles.
- Use pencils more often to cut down the number of plastic pens you buy.

When you do your audit you'll be surprised at how big your plastic footprint really is!

Trial things out, do your research, ask other plastic-free champions for advice and talk to your suppliers. Talk to your Chamber or BID group. Can you get a bulk buy scheme going involving other plastic-free businesses? Don't worry if you can't tackle everything right now or can't find an immediate solution – the steps you CAN and DO take will still make a big difference.

PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITY STATUS

Once you have made three changes and have a plan to tackle others in the business, let your local Plastic Free Communities group know and become a 'Plastic Free Champion'!

You'll be promoted locally as a plastic-free business so people know where to shop to support a plastic free lifestyle. Window stickers are available and you'll get a certificate when your location achieves SAS Plastic Free status.

Then what? Take another look at your business/organisation. What can you do next? Are there other ways you can reduce plastics in your business and in your town? Can you encourage and mentor other businesses? Can you put pressure on suppliers? Stay in touch – we're building a community resistance and your experiences will help others.

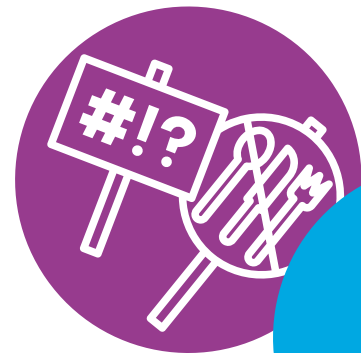
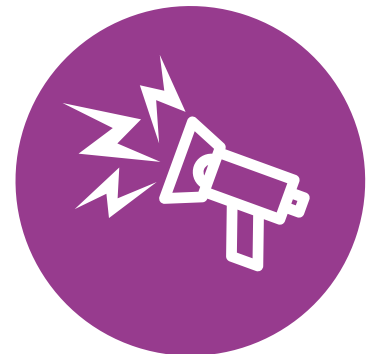
Single-use plastics are present in our world in staggering numbers. Even small, gradual changes can make a significant difference.

TELL THE WORLD!

Put your business on the plastic-free map by sharing your efforts with the community through social media, websites and business directories.

Display your window stickers, posters and certificates with pride! Share your story in your community and on social media. Get involved in local plastic-free events. Tell your customers, tell fellow businesses, tell your networks!

Remember to use these hashtags on social media:
#PlasticFreeCommunities #PlasticFreeCoastlines



BIOPLASTICS AND COMPOSTABLES

Compostable bioplastic packaging made from sustainable plant based materials like wood, sugarcane and corn starch are becoming increasingly popular as replacements for oil-based plastic products.

Beware of greenwash in bio-based food and drink packaging, especially any 'marine friendly' claims or statements that items made from PLA plant starch are easily home compostable or friendly to the natural environment. Generally nothing is 'good for landfill' either!

Know the Score:

1. There is no mandatory legislation that covers the use of the terms biodegradable or compostable in food and drink packaging.
2. As a business buyer you could be "sold" on the environmental benefits of a product alone without enough accurate information on product disposal to make an informed decision.
3. Businesses are led to believe that because a product is compostable or biodegradable it poses little negative effect on the environment. This is untrue! Most compostable materials require specific processes and heat conditions to break-down. Put into normal household waste, landfill or littered they can be just as resilient as oil-based plastic!

Properties of Different Bioplastics:

PLA (Polylactic acid) a bioplastic made from corn starch commonly used for bags, cutlery, cold cups, hot cup/container lining and straws. PLA must be "hot" or industrially composted. It's not going anywhere if you put it in your garden compost or food waste collection.

Bagasse is recycled sugarcane used for takeaway boxes. It's not bioplastic, just pressed sugarcane. This can be "cold"/home or "hot"/industrially composted. However, some commercial bagasse is not accredited for home composting.

CPLA is a form of PLA that is heat resistant and must be "hot" or industrially composted.

RCPLA is 'Recycled CPLA'. Again this can only be composted in "hot" or industrial processes.

Cellophane is a wood pulp cellulose based material. Like other bioplastics it must be "hot"/industrially composted. There are dissolving wood pulp cellulose based materials on the market that can be "cold"/home or "hot"/industrially composted.

It is always worth checking with suppliers and manufacturers how sustainable alternatives are disposed of. Pick compostable over bio-degradable but be aware that many compostable products are not home compostable and need to go to special composting facilities, of which there are very few in the UK.

The bottom-line is check what you are buying and its waste journey. **SAS don't endorse or recommend specific products. Our message is to avoid single use as much as you can, by encouraging elimination, reuse and recycling.**

Pollution Stats:

- The UK uses a staggering 38.5 million single-use plastic bottles every day. Of which fewer than 60% are currently recycled!!
- Only 1% of the 2.5 billion paper coffee cups used in the UK each year are recycled.
- Used for just 20 minutes, once discarded a straw can last in the environment for 100s of years. Straws Suck!
- Plastic bags fragment in 100-300 years depending on thickness and size, but will remain at large in the environment indefinitely.
- Millions of toothbrushes are discarded every year in order to preserve our dental health. Sell a non-plastic toothbrush to ensure they don't pollute our environment post use.
- Single use plastic utensils are often not recycled due to contamination with food and cost of recycling per unit. Refuse to stock them, provide sustainable alternatives and reduce this unnecessary plastic addition to landfill.
- Nearly 24 cotton bud sticks are found for every 100m of UK coastline! These are incorrectly disposed of down the toilet and can last for 100s of years in the environment.
- Each person in the UK generates around 175kg of packaging waste every year.

THANKS FOR READING!

Surfers Against Sewage is a marine conservation and campaigning charity inspiring, uniting and empowering communities to protect oceans, waves, beaches and wildlife. Plastic pollution in our oceans is the 'new sewage'. Blighting our beaches and strangling our seashores it reaches every part of our oceans. It is one of the biggest global environmental threats of our age and fighting it together is our priority issue.

To Combat Plastic Pollution, we will:

- Stop the problem at source
- Clean up pollution from our beaches

Plastic Free Communities is a movement to engage and connect individuals, communities and businesses in the collective effort to reduce the flow of single-use plastics into the marine environment.

This project is made possible thanks to donations by our members

www.plasticfree.org.uk
www.sas.org.uk



**PLASTIC FREE
COMMUNITIES**
SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE

COMMUNITY TOOLKIT



Continuously working to be the positive change we want to see in the world. This toolkit has been sponsored and designed by:

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END DATE

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THE PROBLEM: AVOIDABLE SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Plastic pollution has sadly become synonymous with any coastal activity, from surfing to swimming, beach holidays to wildlife watching — it is simply an expected part of the experience. This is why marine plastic pollution, and specifically tackling society's throwaway, excessive or unnecessary plastic use is now Surfers Against Sewage's top priority.

Plastic pollution is an issue that connects the environment with all parts of society. It is something that we can take action on at every level. Only through concrete, collective, positive action will we be able to stop the flood of plastic pollution from overwhelming our world.

The ocean sustains us, our wellbeing and our planet. Hundreds of coastal and inland communities have already embraced the vision to create Plastic Free Coastlines. You are reading this toolkit because you are the resistance, the solution. You are joining a global coming-together of citizens, communities, businesses and government to create Plastic Free Communities and a cleaner future for our oceans.





#PLASTICFREECOASTLINES
#PLASTICFREECOMMUNITIES
#REFUSETOUSE

CREATE PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITIES

Action is needed now, and through this toolkit you will learn how to create your own Plastic Free Community and help spread the revolution. The team of experts at SAS HQ have developed five objectives that serve as qualifying criteria. These include forming the backbone of your community group, getting local authorities on board, committing businesses to ditching single-use plastic and making a concerted effort to make alternatives readily available.

We want your journey towards Plastic Free Community status to be fun and rewarding. Remember that small changes can make a huge difference. Keep it simple and make change happen!



CREATE COMMUNITY ACTION NOW!

Thank you for joining to help create a Plastic Free Community! Your passion and creativity will help us grow the movement. Share the message among your community, make it fun and see your local area awarded Plastic Free Community status.

Here are some simple tips to get you off on the right track:

Refill – Encourage local cafes, pubs and public spaces to make sure drinking water is readily available and remember to carry a reusable water bottle with you.

Reduce – Discuss the use of single-use plastic in your favourite cafe and challenge them to reduce their use of it. Wooden stirrers and reusable coffee cups make immediate positive impact.

Reuse – Remember to take your reusable bag each time you go shopping. Save yourself money and the environment in one action – win-win!

Recycle – Make sure you recycle any single-use plastic bottles and containers you come into contact with. These can become new products! Don't waste plastic!

Refuse – Share the impact straws can have on local wildlife with friends and family and tell them to refuse a straw when ordering a drink. If it is a must, there are plenty of reusable versions available to take with them.

Plastic Free Kit – such as bamboo toothbrushes, or reusable travel cutlery – gift these to friends and family to inspire them to tackle their plastic footprint.

Replace – Get your restaurant or takeaway to replace single-use sachets with refillable and reusable containers.

Plastic Free Picnic – Don't let single-use plastics get in the way of fantastic food and company when out enjoying your favourite beach or park. Hold a **#PlasticFreePicnic** and invite friends to bring a dish (plastic-free of course!).

Help fund SAS – Support SAS financially and help fund the resistance. Just £5 helps support our Plastic Free Communities movement.



REMEMBER YOUR INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS:



Checkpoint Individual Action Plan:

- ☐ Remember your **refillable water bottle**
- ☐ Take a reusable coffee cup and **refuse single-use takeaway cups**
- ☐ **Refuse** single-use packaging
- ☐ **Resist a straw**; straws suck
- ☐ **Refuse** a single-use plastic bag and take your own
- ☐ **Take your own cutlery or use sustainable alternatives**
- ☐ **Avoid** single-use plastics in the bathroom
- ☐ **Refuse** single-use condiment sachets
- ☐ Do your own **#MiniBeachClean** or **#CommunityCleanUp**. Grab a handful of plastic pollution everytime you go out
- ☐ **Fund the Resistance** – Donate to SAS today and help fund the resistance. Just £5 helps support the movement towards Plastic Free Communities

THE OFFENDERS

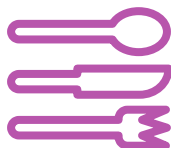
1. Plastic bottles



2. Coffee cups and lids



3. Plastic cutlery



4. Straws & plastic stirrers



5. Plastic 'food-on-the-go' packaging



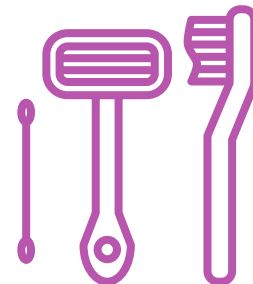
6. Plastic bags



8. Plastic drinking cups



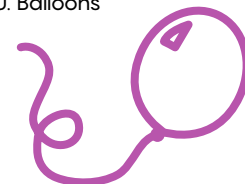
7. Bathroom plastics:
Toothbrushes, disposable razors, plastic sanitary items, cotton buds, shower gel, shampoo & conditioner



9. Condiment sachets



10. Balloons



REFUSE TO USE!

1. SAS beach cleans removed nearly 29,000 plastic bottles from our coastline in 2017.

2. In the UK, we use 7 million disposable coffee cups every day.

3. Food and drink-related plastic items now make up one in every five pieces of litter.

4. Plastic straws are in the top 10 items polluting the ocean and harming marine life.

5. 138 pieces of food and drink waste litter every 100 metres of beach.

6. Plastic bags can kill marine wildlife by unintentional digestion or inhalation.

7. A cotton bud stick can take 150 years to break down in the marine environment.

8. In the UK, 2.5bn plastic cups are thrown away each year.

9. Empty sachets are regularly found on SAS beach cleans.

10. Marine animals can be entangled and killed by balloons that end up in the sea.



HOW TO USE YOUR TOOLKIT



On each page of this toolkit you will find an objective that needs to be met in order to achieve Plastic Free status.

The toolkit shows you the requirements for each objective and how to achieve them. It gives you a framework to follow and the practical advice and guidance to enable you to establish your own local plastic-free network in the best way suited to your local circumstances. Guidance on applying for Plastic Free Community status is found at the end of the toolkit and on the SAS website.

Don't be daunted.
The movement is growing in strength every day.

Toolkit Tips:

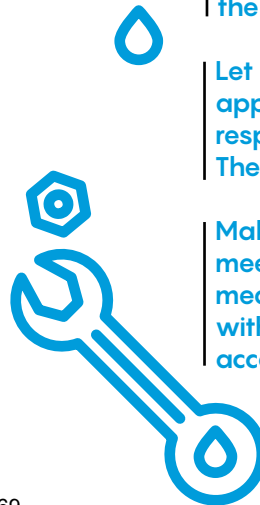
Develop a plan to meet each objective individually.

Keep it simple! Start with the easiest objective first. Get some movement – progress in a campaign is great to encourage others and keep Plastic-Free morale high.

Notify as many people as you can about your Plastic Free Community intention. The more people that know, the more support you'll gain.

Let your local authority know – approach a councillor or person responsible for the environment. Their support could prove invaluable!

Make sure to record evidence of meeting objectives – take pictures, media cuttings and share this info with SAS HQ. Evidence is needed to accomplish your award.



OBJECTIVE 1: LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Requirements:

Local council (Town, Parish, or Community) passes a resolution* supporting the journey to Plastic Free Community status, committing to plastic-free alternatives and plastic-free initiatives within the constituency.

Council must lead by example to remove single-use plastic items from their premises.

Council to encourage plastic-free initiatives, promoting the campaign and supporting events.

A representative of the council must be named on the Plastic Free Community steering group.

Why?

Local councils are in a unique position to lead change within local areas. They act as consumers, using single-use plastics in canteens, meetings, and during daily business. They are influencers, having direct access to the running of local schools, businesses and community organisations. And finally they work

as a political body, often with cross-party members, and by showing unity on an action can install confidence and determination to succeed.

*A resolution is the decision taken when the outcome of a motion or proposal has been agreed.

How?

Demonstrating local public support for Plastic Free Communities will encourage council members to take action.

You can do this in a number of ways. Here are just a few suggestions:

Invite local councillors to a beach clean or community clean-up. Show the issue of plastic pollution first hand.

Write a letter to the council, asking them to support Plastic Free Communities.

Gain and show support from local groups, businesses and the general public. This can be done via a joint letter or even a petition.

Attend council meetings and get Plastic Free Communities on the agenda.

Involve the local press to raise awareness in the community.

This objective will be met when a resolution is passed.

TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY:

1.

GAIN BROAD SUPPORT FROM YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY FOR ALL PLASTIC FREE INITIATIVES IN YOUR AREA.



GET A LOCAL COUNCILLOR ON BOARD AND ASK THEM TO INTRODUCE THE MOTION AND GARNER SUPPORT.

2.



3.

LOBBY OTHER LOCAL COUNCILLORS OR ASK TO DO A PRESENTATION AT THE DECISION MEETING TO GIVE IT THE BEST CHANCE OF BEING PASSED.



REFUSE



SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUTLERY

100 billion individual disposable plastic utensils are used **every year**.

Each utensil could last **centuries** in the natural environment.

Many sustainable alternatives are available including wooden versions, or why not take your own reusable kit.





OBJECTIVE 2: RESISTANCE HUBS – LOCAL BUSINESSES

Requirements:

At least three single-use plastic items removed from local businesses and retailers or replaced with sustainable alternatives.

Your target number of businesses are determined by population size (the following 'Checkpoint' page has a breakdown).

Why?

Removing the option to purchase and/or use single-use plastics is the easiest way to avoid them. Making suitable, sustainable alternatives readily available to customers will bring about a change in behaviour and reduce the amount of throwaway plastic in our society.

How?

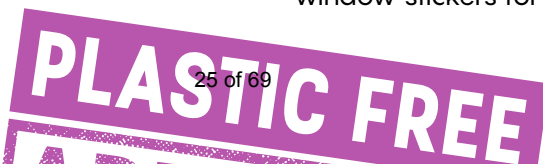
Identify at least three single-use plastic items being used in local businesses and find suitable alternatives.

Lots of suggestions are available on the SAS website www.sas.org.uk

Engage and Inform

Approach local businesses and discuss the importance of Plastic Free Communities. Use your Business Toolkit to help them find ways to reduce single-use plastics. Provide supportive businesses with Plastic Free Champion window stickers. Once you have achieved full status — so do they! This creates a buzz around the movement locally and will drive custom from members of the public who want to support plastic-free businesses. Encourage businesses to 'not give a fork' and allow customers to 'opt-in' to single-use plastics, rather than distributing them as a matter of course.

Businesses will be surprised by how much they save in costs as well as dramatically reducing waste. In recognition of their contribution to the community achieving its status, we will provide certificates and window stickers for businesses to display.



Checkpoint

Contact details			
Sector/ Type			
Number			
Business name		Business Target	
Tally of businesses committed to Plastic Free Community		Population	

- | | |
|-------------------|----|
| 0 > 2,500 | 2 |
| 2,500 > 5,000 | 3 |
| 5,000 > 10,000 | 5 |
| 10,000 > 20,000 | 6 |
| 20,000 > 50,000 | 12 |
| 50,000 > 75,000 | 24 |
| 75,000 > 100,000 | 30 |
| 100,000 > 125,000 | 34 |
| 125,000 > 150,000 | 38 |
| 150,000 > 200,000 | 42 |
| 200,000 > 250,000 | 46 |
| 250,000 > 300,000 | 50 |
| 300,000 > 400,000 | 55 |
| 400,000 > 500,000 | 60 |
| 500,000 + | 70 |



TIPS FOR WORKING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

1.

POP IN AND HAVE A CHAT. SIGN THEM UP AND GIVE THEM A COPY OF THE SAS BUSINESS TOOLKIT.



KEEP IN TOUCH, ENCOURAGE THEM AND CHAMPION WHAT THEY ARE DOING ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

2.



3.

MAKE IT EASY! GET THEM TO TACKLE THE THREE EASIEST ITEMS FIRST AND DRAW UP A PLAN FOR THE REST.

REFUSE



SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BOTTLES

In 2016, **200 plastic bottles** were found **per mile of UK coastline**.

Single-use plastic bottles, cans and glass account for **40% of all litter** (by volume).

Refillable water bottles come in all shapes and sizes, they can keep water hot as well as cold and **can be reused time and time again**.



OBJECTIVE 3: PLASTIC FREE ALLIES

Requirements:

This objective is about widespread community engagement. It is about spreading the plastic-free message to a diverse audience and making sure community groups and organisations are involved in the fight against avoidable single-use plastics.

We have suggested some targets on the next page. The more evidence provided of groups and organisations getting involved and wanting to be part of change in their community, the easier it is to meet this objective.



Suggested targets

Half of community spaces going plastic free. These can include; beaches, community centres, village halls, places of worship, libraries etc.

At least one community organisation. These can include: Scouts, Girl Guides, Women's Institute, Surf Lifesaving Clubs etc.

One third of schools in the local area.

Half of universities and colleges.

For populations of over 100,000, a flagship employer for the area must be included (such as a university, hospital or large business with over 100 staff).

Why?

Community action is the pathway to success for Plastic Free Communities. Ensuring as many people as possible are aware of the campaign and issue of single-use plastics, offers the best chance for change, reducing the amount of plastic pollution in our environment.



How?

Increasing awareness of plastic pollution and its solutions will empower more people to make positive behavioural changes. Try removing at least three single-use plastic items from your workplace or organisation. Empower your colleagues to join the resistance and make your workplace part of your Plastic Free Community.

Running education talks and presentations will inform a wide selection of the public to what they can do to support Plastic Free Communities. Recruiting and recording those who support the campaign can be used to support your application.

Checkpoint

Number of allies committed to supporting Plastic Free Communities.

Name	Type eg. school	Contact details



TIPS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

1.

LINK UP WITH OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS SO THAT YOU'RE ALL WORKING TOGETHER.



RUN TALKS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS.

2.



3.

ROLL-OUT THE SAS PLASTIC FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME LOCALLY.



REFUSE



SINGLE-USE BATHROOM PLASTICS

260 million plastic toothbrushes are thrown away **every year** in the UK.

Plastic cotton bud sticks are the **6th most common** item found on our beaches – finding their way there via our toilets and sewers!

Seek sustainable alternatives – cardboard cotton bud sticks and bamboo toothbrushes and many more are readily available.



OBJECTIVE 4: PLASTIC FREE RALLIES

Requirements:

At least two local community events arranged and made open for all to attend, in one calendar year.

Suggested targets:

Two beach cleans or community clean-ups. You can do this by taking part in SAS's nationwide Beach Clean Series each Spring and Autumn.

One fundraising event for SAS to support Plastic Free Communities

One 'Mass Unwrap' at a supermarket of your choice.

**A SINGLE
SAS BEACH
CLEAN CAN
REMOVE
OVER 5
TONNES
OF LITTER
IN JUST
ONE DAY!**

Why?

The more people participating in Plastic Free Communities, the greater success we will achieve. Events are a great way to spread the message and engage a wide audience, growing your plastic-free movement locally.

By participating in an SAS beach clean series, you know that you will be joined by an army of thousands of volunteers from all over the country, working together to improve your local environment and make our coastlines, plastic-free. If you're not near the coast, organise your own community clean-up at a location of your choice.

How?

Guidance on organising a SAS Beach Clean can be found on the SAS website (sas.org.uk). Spreading awareness of the event and recruiting volunteers is up to you. Contact local press, place posters in prominent locations and set up social media events. The more people you can tell about the event,

the more people will attend. See this as your 'call to arms', your local recruitment drive. This objective allows you to be individual and imaginative, use your skills, connections and ideas to create events you feel will raise awareness and make a positive impact on the local environment.



Checkpoint

Attendance	
Location	
Event type	
Tally of plastic-free events planned / already taken place	



TIPS FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS:

1. SIGN UP TO RUN A SAS BEACH CLEAN OR COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP EVENT.



HOLD AN SAS FUNDRAISING EVENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

2.



3. CREATE A PRESENCE AT LOCAL FESTIVALS AND ENCOURAGE ORGANISERS TO GO PLASTIC FREE.



REFUSE



SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUPS

2.5 billion throwaway coffee cups are used in the UK every year.

Coffee cups are often non-recyclable due to a thin plastic film lining the inside.

Many cafes and coffee chains offer a **discount to those bringing their own reusable cup!** Take advantage of a cheaper coffee!



OBJECTIVE 5: LOCAL RESISTANCE 'STEERING' GROUP

Requirements:

Local group of stakeholders (must include a council representative and a flagship business employee) to meet at least twice per year to discuss the progress of Plastic Free Communities locally; agreeing and setting direction, meeting objectives, and completing the application for official Plastic Free Community status. For populations over 100,000, a flagship business employee must be a member of the group.

Why?

Your 'steering' group will amplify the work of the application and ensure that the effort truly becomes a whole community action. An agreed strategy will keep the operation on track and ensure objectives are successfully met.



How?

You are reading this because you want to make your local area a Plastic Free Community. Start by asking members of local businesses and community organisations to join you in forming a steering group for your area. There may already be a local group in place, in which case, you can

join! Ask SAS if you are not aware of one in your local area, or for more advice about how to start the group. A group needn't be formal, but at least two meetings a year should take place in order to meet this objective and for your area to be awarded Plastic Free Community Status.

Checkpoint

- ☐ — Local Resistance Strategic Group established.
- ☐ — Group includes 1 member of local council.
- ☐ — For populations over 100,000, a flagship business employee is named on the group.
- ☐ — Plan to submit evidence to SAS.

TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR STEERING GROUP :

1. PICK KEY LOCAL DECISION-MAKERS AND INFLUENCERS TO BE ON YOUR STEERING GROUP.



2.

KEEP IT SMALL (MAX. 10 PEOPLE) .



3. SET-UP SEPARATE MEETINGS FOR VOLUNTEERS.



REFUSE



SINGLE-USE STRAWS & PLASTIC STIRRERS

Plastic straws are in the top 10 items polluting the ocean and harming marine life.

Plastic straws are not recycled. They are used for minutes at best and many find their way into the marine environment, where they can linger for hundreds of years!



HOW TO APPLY FOR PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITY STATUS FOR YOUR AREA!

Now you have gathered evidence of how your local area has met its objectives, it's time to apply for Official Plastic Free Community status.

When you have completed all five objectives, fill-in and send your Mission Report form (along with all required evidence) to:

plasticfreecoastlines@sas.org.uk

Official Plastic Free Community locations will receive:

| **Plastic Free Certificate**

| **The Plastic Free 'stamp of approval'**

| **A locator and feature on the SAS Plastic Free Communities website**

| **The opportunity to use the official Plastic Free Communities logo on correspondence and location signs**

HAVE YOU COMPLETED ALL FIVE?

- ☐ Objective 1
Local Governance
- ☐ Objective 2
**Resistance Hubs:
Local Businesses**
- ☐ Objective 3
Plastic Free Allies
- ☐ Objective 4
**On The Ground Action:
Plastic Free Rallies**
- ☐ Objective 5
**Local Resistance
Strategic Group**



Field Notes



Field Notes





Surfers Against Sewage is a marine conservation and campaigning charity inspiring, uniting and empowering communities to protect oceans, waves, beaches and wildlife.

Plastic pollution in our oceans is the 'new sewage'. Blighting our beaches and strangling our seashores it reaches every part of our oceans. It is one of the biggest global environmental threats of our age and fighting it together is our priority issue.

To combat plastic pollution we will:

- Stop the problem at source
- Clean up pollution from our beaches

Plastic Free Communities is a movement to engage and connect individuals, communities and businesses in the collective effort to reduce the flow of single-use plastics into the marine environment.

Good luck!



THIS PROJECT IS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO DONATIONS FROM OUR MEMBERS.

www.sas.org.uk



Mission Statement

To help Birmingham become a sustainable city.

We exist to affect social change and the transition towards low-carbon and sustainable lifestyles. By inspiring and supporting communities and organisations across Birmingham to take positive action, we will demonstrate that building low carbon communities brings benefits, opportunities and wellbeing to everyone, whilst protecting our environment.

Vision Statement

We envision a city where air pollution is a thing of the past, not a current problem. A city that is powered by renewable energy and where homes are energy efficient. A city that always reduces, then re-uses, then recycles what it consumes. A city where we have access to nature and can learn about our place in the world. A city whose citizens demand a better approach from businesses such as tackling unnecessary plastic waste. A city we can all be proud of and which leads the way in how to live a simpler life with limited impact and with respect for the planet.

By 2030:

- Birmingham will be a sustainable city - low-waste, low-carbon, low-impact
- We will have expanded our reach and influence across the city
- We will have empowered more citizens to take environmental action

Strategic Priorities

- **tackling air pollution**
- **reducing reliance upon fossil fuels**
- **minimising the city's impact on the planet**

We will do this through testing and delivering:

- **pioneering projects**
- **engagement through arts and education**
- **thinking and action spaces across the city's communities and business sectors**

Current Projects focused on Plastics

Refill Birmingham - We are launching this in Birmingham in 2019 in partnership with Severn Trent Water and Refill Campaign nationally. It is aimed at promoting the use of re-usable water bottles. Reducing single-use plastic bottle usage and encouraging drinking of water. Our action day is 19th March 2019 where volunteers will be present in the BID areas across the city, signing up businesses to become Refill stations on the Refill App. We would like to see more public fountains in the city too.

Links

ecobirmingham: <http://www.ecobirmingham.com>

Refill Campaign: <https://refill.org.uk/>

We are also on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn as @ecobirmingham

What can the council do through its commissioning to reduce the use of Single Use Plastics?

This briefing note proposes how the Council can work towards eliminating the use of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) within its supply chain. Consideration has been given to the following points:

1. Current legislation
2. To explore how current and future contracts can support the elimination of SUPs through the supply chain and how they it will be monitored
3. Potential issues

Legislation

With the amount of harmful plastic litter in oceans and seas growing ever greater, the European Commission is proposing new EU-wide rules to target the 10 single-use plastic (SUPs) products most often found on Europe's beaches and seas, as well as lost and abandoned fishing gear. The agreement is based on the SUPs proposal presented in May by the Commission as part of the world's first comprehensive Plastics Strategy, adopted earlier this year, to protect citizens and the environment from plastic pollution whilst fostering growth and innovation.

The new rules also contributes to a broader effort of turning Europe into a more sustainable, circular economy, reflected in the Circular Economy Action Plan adopted in December 2015. The new rules are proportionate and tailored to get the best results. This means different measures will be applied to different products:

- Where alternatives are readily available and affordable SUPs products will be banned from the market.
- For products without straight-forward alternatives, the focus is on limiting their use through a national reduction in consumption; design and labelling requirements and waste management/ clean-up obligations for producers.

Details of the Single Use Plastics Directive which can be found below:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/single-use-plastics-2018-may-28_en

Timescale: The new rules, must now be formally approved by the European Parliament and the Council, but are expected to be agreed and the EU hopes it will go into effect by 20/21. The UK will also have to incorporate the rules into national law if the ban becomes a full-fledged directive before the end of a Brexit transition period. The UK is also proposing a ban which is subject to consultation and would be enforced at some point between October 2019 and October 2020. The U.K. government has already banned microbeads and introduced a charge on single use plastic bags.

A short overview of the single-use plastic items and fishing gear and the measures foreseen in the Commission's proposal is attached in the table below.

	Consumption reduction	Market restriction	Product design requirement	Marking requirements	Extended producer responsibility	Separate collection objective	Awareness raising measures
Food containers	X				X		X
Cups for beverages	X				X		X
Cotton bud sticks		X					
Cutlery, plates, stirrers, straws		X					
Sticks for balloons		X					
Balloons				X	X		X
Packets & wrappers					X		X
Beverage containers, their caps & lids			X		X		X
- Beverage bottles			X		X	X	X
Tobacco product filters					X		X
Sanitary items:							
- Wet wipes				X	X		X
- Sanitary towels				X			X
Lightweight plastic carrier bags					X		X
Fishing gear					X		X

How current and future contracts can support the elimination of SUPs through the supply chain

The Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (BBC4SR) which was revised in December 2018 now includes, under the theme of Ethical Procurement the following social value measure: "Contractors and their supply chains should support the banning of single-use plastics in their place of work and in the goods and services they provide."

- **Live Projects (Pre-tender)**

I Learn training on the updated BBC4SR is being finalised and will be rolled out asap with the aim to be including the new BBC4SR in tenders by April.

Where there is a contract specific requirement to address single use plastics i.e. due to the nature of the contract, then this should be incorporated into the specification. Tenderers can make commitments against their social value action plan. However, as we can only legally enforce what's in our contracts, we cannot insist that companies adopt such ethical behaviours company wide. We should therefore also promote it as best practice.

- **Live Contracts**

We should work with contractors to reduce demand for and ultimately eliminate SUPs in the contract. The social value measure will be raised by the Contract Manager at the contract review meetings where contractors will be encouraged to vary their BBC4SR action plan to include the measure. This will then become a part of their Contract deliverables.

Proposals that other Local Authorities are implementing which could be considered are:

- Support our schools and communities in their efforts to make their buildings plastic-free zones.
- Support communities and litter-pick initiatives to ensure our parks, beaches and open spaces are free from plastic litter.
- Require all our suppliers to minimise the use of single-use plastics in their service provision and find sustainable alternatives (where appropriate).
- Share best practice and information about plastic free initiatives, to residents, businesses, visitors and beyond through the council's social media and other communication channels. The communications will inform contractors that they have a duty to raise awareness within their supply chain.
- A plastics education programme in schools and the wider community in partnership with partner organisations.

Issues for consideration

- The EU has suggested that some additional work is needed on guidance from any proposed new laws. As legislation and policy are more clearly defined we will be better able to determine how we can support it.
- In the meantime, we can seek feedback from providers to understand potential cost and service implications.

Next Steps

- **Live Contracts**
 - Discuss with Contract Managers the issue of SUPs and the process to capture reduction of SUPs within their contractors' BBC4SR Action Plan (including usage within their supply chain e.g .manufacturers could consider how plastic protective wrapping for deliveries may be reduced etc..)
 - Determine the exposure of our contracts to the highlighted products. Consult our suppliers to better understand the position/direction.
 - Discuss SUPs with contractors to consider options in table on p2.
- **Tenders**
 - Potentially specify the outcome of no SUPs and test the financial and service impact by asking for alternative tenders that addresses a reduction or ceasing the use of SUPs.

Responses to City Council Motion on Plastics from Place Directorate

	Motion	Response	Officer Responsible
1	Encouraging the city's institutions, businesses and citizens to adopt measures to minimise the use of single-use plastic products.	The ambition to minimise the use of single-use plastic products is fully supported, but from a waste management perspective it is important to remember that whatever material is used to replace plastic, if it is still single-use we need to ensure that there is a processing route to recycle it and that there would be a lead-in time to make the contractual arrangements required with waste disposal companies. The preferred option would be to encourage reusable items over alternative recyclable items.	Darren Share (Acting Director Waste Management) / Louise Bessant (Project Manager Waste Management)
2	Immediately starting the process of reducing the sale and provision of single-use plastic products such as bottles, cups, cutlery and drinking straws in Council buildings where it is reasonable to do so.	This is not a matter that Place can influence.	

3	Encouraging market traders to sell re-usable containers and inviting customers to bring their own, with the aim of phasing out single-use plastic containers and cutlery on market stalls.	<p>The Markets Service will raise this matter with all Market Trader Committees (Rag Market, Open Market and Indoor Market) through their regular liaison meetings with a view to asking them to work with their members to phase out the use of single-use plastic containers and cutlery on market stalls by the end of 2019.</p> <p>Asking market traders to reduce their usage of single-use plastic carrier bags by encouraging customers to bring their own shopping bags.</p>	Chris Neville (Acting Director Regulation and Enforcement / Sajeela Naseer (Head of Trading Standards and Markets))
4	Working with the Council events team and creating a policy in which single-use “disposable” plastic cups are replaced at all large city festivals with re-usable or deposit scheme cups and which the release of balloons on City Council property is not permitted, investigating the possibility of ultimately making these a condition for obtaining a licence for large scale events held in the city.	<p>Events</p> <p>The City Council allows organisers of event to use council owned land. Event organisers are provided with the City Council Event Organisers Guide. The latest version was revised in 2017. Section 4.10 of the Guide deals with sustainability and makes recommendations for organisers to help them deliver more sustainable and environmentally friendly events. A copy of the relevant section is attached. There is an opportunity to revise the Guide to prohibit event organisers using single-use plastics as part of their contractual terms. Suitable alternatives for cutlery could include wooden utensils and alternatives to plastic bottles can include cans. Vendors could be encouraged to offer discounts to people who bring their own reusable cups or bottles.</p> <p>Balloons</p> <p>Although our Event Guide discourages balloon releases it does not prohibit them. The City’s Events Guide would require amendment to prohibit balloon releases as part of the contract between the event organiser and the council in order to give effect to the proposal.</p>	Steve Hollingworth (Director of Sports, Events, Open Space Wellbeing and Culture) / Garry Peal, (Events Commissioning Manager)

		<p>Licences</p> <p>Environmental concerns cannot be considered when deciding whether to grant or refuse a licence application under the Licensing Act 2003. Only issues that fall within one of the 4 licensing objectives can result in a condition on a licence, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prevention of crime and disorder • Public safety • The prevention of public nuisance • The protection of children from harm <p>Therefore the Licensing Act cannot be used as a method to control single-use plastic.</p>	
5	Promoting refill schemes with retail businesses and Business Improvement Districts.	<p>It would be possible to engage with BIDs across the city to encourage them to ask their members to offer free water refills in their premises. This would be a far more cost effective way of communicating the message than if the council were to try to engage with each business individually.</p> <p>It may be possible to invite a local college or university to build a communication programme for us to spread the message and encourage the public to ask for and use free water refill points as part of a student course.</p>	Chris Neville (Acting Director of Regulation and Enforcement)
6	Investigating the possibility of a installing free water fountains in City Council reception	This is not a matter that Place can influence.	

	areas and elsewhere in our buildings.		
7	Further investigating having locally branded water containers for sale.	This is not a matter that Place can influence.	
8	Encourage the city's businesses, organisations and residents to go 'plastic free,' working with best practice partners in the city to explore the creation of a 'plastic free network,' that could provide business support, practical guidelines and advice to help local businesses transition from SUPs to sustainable alternatives	This is not a matter that Place can influence.	
9	Working with tenants in commercial properties owned by Birmingham City Council to encourage the phasing out of disposable plastic cups, bottles, cutlery and straws.	This would be a matter for the Council's Property Team.	

10	Ensuring that sustainability is a key feature of the 2022 Commonwealth Games and commit to working with the LOC and Games partners to minimise the use of single use plastic items.	This will be a matter for Neil Carney as the Project Director of the Commonwealth Games	
11	Ensuring that all Local Authority Maintained Schools are part of a new City Council initiative to help them become plastic-free working with partners such as CityServe and Veolia.	This would be a matter for Education.	
12	Encouraging, enabling and aiding all City Council employees, Councillors, businesses, community groups, and citizens to engage with an annual Plastic Free Challenge Month to be launched in April 2019.	Place would welcome the opportunity to participate in such a challenge, although we would suggest that the proposal to stage the challenge in April 2019 is optimistic given that many of the proposals in the Council Motion will not have been enacted by April.	Chris Neville (Acting Director Regulation and Enforcement)
13	Writing to all major	We would suggest that this has already been achieved through the action of	Chris Neville

	supermarkets trading in the city encouraging them to introduce plastic free aisles.	central government whereby it has written to all major supermarket chains on this topic.	(Acting Director Regulation and Enforcement)
14.	Working with Procurement services to encourage all businesses with which the Council has contracts to support the banning of single-use plastics in their place of work and consider the possibility of phasing out of single-use plastics in the awarding of new contracts where this is relevant and proportionate.	This will be a matter for Procurement to comment.	

4.10 Greener Events – Sustainability in Action

Every event – from a village fête to a major sporting event – will have economic, social and environmental impacts. Water and energy resources are put under pressure, significant amounts of waste and carbon emissions can be generated. Events can also put a strain on

local communities. Event organisers need to demonstrate a responsible approach to event management.

Successful implementation of an event sustainability management system will ensure continual performance improvement and systematic management of issues rather than an ad-hoc approach. Adopting a Sustainable Event Management standard such as “*ISO 20121*” will help you to minimise potential negative impacts on the environment, communities and local economy - maximizing the positive impacts and leaving a legacy to be proud of.

It really comes down to basics, not wasting energy or water, recycling waste, collecting litter, promoting local foods, local traders, etc. and all participants should consider the implications on the environment of their event/ their stall/ their operation; and aim to support Birmingham as a clean, green and safe city.

All events are opportunities to communicate environmental messages to the public. BCC aims to actively work with organisers to ensure that best practice is introduced at all stages of event management. This checklist of five steps will help you to achieve this.

Step 1 Waste Management

The city council supports sustainable waste management and the principle of ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’. There is a pressing need to reduce the amount of waste that is sent to landfill and to re-use or recycle as much as technically possible. Waste is probably the most complex environmental issue for an event. There are many considerations to be taken into account in setting up a waste reduction plan, but the extra effort can lead to cost savings, reduced environmental impact, a cleaner site

and positive publicity. Note that all wastes produced at an event site are subject to strict regulation.

- Involve the waste and cleansing contractor in early planning of the event to integrate recycling systems.
- Ensure that contractors hold a waste carrier's license. This is a legal requirement. In addition insist on receiving copies of the Waste Transfer Notes (WTN's). For help in understanding WTNs and associated legal duties, use the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) website.
- Give preference to a contractor that operates an accredited environmental management system e.g. such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001 or Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)
- Request a hand picking service so waste is collected into recycling streams.
- Spend time planning the locations for the recycling facilities, bearing in mind major routes, the number of expected visitors and the source of potential litter. Container design can also encourage proper sorting of materials
- Advertising recycling at events can increase participation. Display the recycling logo (and more information if space allows) in advertising prior to the event. For events where participants pre-register, include recycling information in the registration pack
- Use event registration and contracts as opportunities to distribute recycling information. Remind traders again about details shortly before the start of the event, and continue to involve them in recycling throughout the event
- Allocate the role of concession-monitor to a responsible person to oversee onsite activities

- Allow only concessions that use recyclable, compostable or reusable cups, plates & utensils to trade at your event. Encourage waste reduction by using serving condiments (such as sugar, milk, vinegar, ketchup) in bulk rather than individual packages

Step 2 Pollution & Nuisance

BCC has a commitment to creating a clean, healthy and attractive built and natural environment; reducing pollution is part of this. Airborne, noise and light pollution need to be minimised.

The impacts of traffic on the city are substantial - exacerbated by event visitors and contractors. This increases local air and noise pollution and contributes to climate change.

- Selecting local contractors will reduce delivery and collection mileages
- Charge for parking and use revenue to subsidise dedicated public transport to the event. Encourage car-sharing
- Promotion – it is essential to emphasise non-car alternatives when promoting the event. Give more prominence to these in printed and website content
- Ask contractors for fuel costs and consider a carbon-offset scheme
- Noise pollution – work within agreed limits and have a procedure in place

Step 3 Energy use & CO2

A significant amount of energy can be used during an event to power stage sound and lighting systems, site lighting and on-site vehicles. The aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable energy solutions.

- If using site power supplied by the authorities or the venue, check to see if it is on a green tariff
- Try to source bio-diesel powered generators or use wind or solar power wherever possible
- Minimise vehicle movements on-site and look into electric powered vehicles for staff to use on large sites
- If renewable sources are not available then request modern, efficient and well maintained, silent generators. It is usually more efficient to use a single larger generator than several small ones
- Investigate opportunities for a carbon offset scheme, after you have minimised energy use

Step 4 Publicity & Communication

- Use a high specification recycled paper for all printed material
- Try not to over-order on print runs
- Keep your contacts database updated to avoid unwanted mail - use email whenever possible

Step 5 After the Event

Review the effectiveness of the plan and communicate with traders, staff, and volunteers to identify potential improvements for the future. Remember that

implementing an environmental plan takes a lot of lead-time. It is expected that environmental legislation and industry-wide standards will become increasingly important in the world of event organisation. Some examples are waste regulations, EMAS and the forthcoming BS 8901 Sustainable Events Standard. The proposed new standard's aim is to "substantially reduce carbon emissions and waste to improve the resource efficiency of the entire event supply chain".

Response from Property Services to the Plastic Free Birmingham Inquiry.

In response to the First Motion resolution agreed on 11 September 2018, Property Services is committed to moving forward with initiatives which seek to address items 3, 9 and 10.

3. Encouraging market traders to sell re-usable containers and inviting customers to bring their own, with the aim of phasing out single-use plastic containers and cutlery on market stalls.

RESPONSE: Working with partners in the Council's Markets team and with the market traders at Birmingham's new Wholesale Markets, Property Services will seek to promote the aspiration to phase out the use of single-use plastic containers and cutlery. The initial approach will be to engage in direct correspondence with tenants whilst exploring the opportunity to draft additional clauses for insertion into future lease agreements, committing tenants to engage in reducing the use of such items.

9. Working with tenants in commercial properties owned by Birmingham City Council to encourage the phasing out of disposable plastic cups, bottles, cutlery and straws.

RESPONSE: Working directly with tenants occupying Council owned commercial properties, Property Services will initially seek to promote the initiative by engaging in direct correspondence with its commercial tenants. An initial target list has been drawn up identifying 'first-phase' businesses in the hot food sector to seek engagement, as those businesses are most likely to be using a predominance of single-use plastic items. A second phase will seek to engage the tenants in the new Wholesale Markets, with further sectors to be targeted over time. Property Services will additionally seek to draft an additional clause(s) for inclusion in future Heads of Terms to be offered to new occupiers of Council owned commercial properties, and further explore the opportunity to include a similar provision in new lease and tenancy documents.

10. Ensuring that sustainability is a key feature of the 2022 Commonwealth Games and commit to working with the LOC and Games partners to minimise the use of single use plastic items.

RESPONSE: Property Services will seek to use its contacts with partners working on the Commonwealth Games to ensure sustainability is a key feature of the Games.

Kathryn James MRICS
Assistant Director of Property

February 2019

Cllr Liz Clements
Scrutiny Office
The Council House
Birmingham
B1 1BB

Dear Liz,

I am writing in response to your email regarding the Birmingham City Council Plastic Free Birmingham Inquiry.

The Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce encourages members to become more sustainable in a number of ways. One such is by promoting best practice through our Chamberlink E-news. This news bulletin is distributed daily and reaches over 14,000 businesses. The Chamber uses this channel to highlight the important work being done by our members in this space to reduce waste and improve recycling practices across the region. During the past year, the Chamber has helped promote a number of important campaigns including Selfridges 'Project Ocean' campaign and the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's pledge to become plastic free by 2022.

The Chamber has also delivered a number of events on the circular economy through our Enterprise Europe Network. These events are aimed at persuading businesses, that through better management of resources and waste materials, they can reduce their costs, increase their profits and support a cleaner environment. Last year, the Enterprise Europe team delivered a workshop 'Make Your Waste Work for You' which helped attendees identify which of their materials and resources can be used by another organisation, either in the same condition or reprocessed for a different use. The event provided a forum for organisations' to discuss which waste streams they have on site or require.

One of our Chamber sections, the Sutton Coldfield Chamber of Commerce, is currently in the process of developing a Sustainability Charter which will form a ten point action plan for members to sign up to. It has been designed to encourage businesses to make a number of small changes including removing plastic cups from the office and installing filter taps, buying locally to reduce carbon footprint and using sustainable sources for office supplies. The Chamber has also recently invested in our new office space, securing second hand furniture in an attempt to cut down on furniture waste and issued reusable water bottles to staff to cut down on the use of single-use plastic cups. We also provide a number of recycling bins around the office which are easily accessible for staff.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Clarke
Policy Assistant

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Leeds By Example

January 2019



THE ISSUE

- We are increasingly eating, drinking and disposing of packaging on the go. The industry is due to be worth >£23 billion by 2022 (currently £17.4bn).
- Younger groups 18 to 34 year olds are twice as likely to buy food on-the-go as others, yet less likely to recycle items.
- Only 58% of plastic bottles that can be recycled are being so.
- A recent report from Recoup described 'On the Go' waste infrastructure as inadequate due to:
 - High levels of contamination.
 - Inadequate budget for consumer communications and education.
 - Procurement and collection costs.
- ReCoup found that of 100 local authorities only 42% of these provided some 'on the go' collections.
- Many cited budget and the need for more data and research into the issue.
- Recycling budgets have fallen by 10% since 2013/14.



AMBITION

1. Run a unique, high profile six month pilot to boost recycling on the go in Leeds city centre (October 18 – March 19).
2. Test the impact of behaviour change, recycling infrastructure and bold, consistent communications.
3. Create a coalition of national and local stakeholders to explore a range of solutions.
4. Independently evaluate and openly share results.
5. Create a legacy for Leeds and a replicable model for other cities to follow.



CURRENT PARTNERS

The **#LeedsByExample** initiative is backed by a unique collaboration of businesses who want to explore solutions to the issue of On The Go recycling:

Alupro, Asda, Association of Convenience Stores, Ball Beverage Packaging Europe, British Plastics Federation, Bunzl, Caffe Nero, Coca-Cola GB, Costa, Co-op, Crown Packaging, Danone, Ecosurety, Greggs, Highland Spring, Innocent, Klöckner Pentaplast (kp), Lucozade Ribena Suntory, Marks and Spencer, McDonald's, Morrisons, PepsiCo, Pret, Starbucks and Shell.

The campaign is delivered locally by a local collaboration including Leeds City Council, Zero Waste Leeds, Forge Recycling and HW Martin.



ON-STREET RECYCLING BINS

22 simple, eye-catching and bold recycling bins have been introduced on the street to test how the public respond to them.

The recycling bins have been placed in the highest footfall areas of the city centre.

The bins are for empty plastic and cans and we are monitoring usage and levels of contamination to check their effectiveness

Quality: 27% contamination (by volume)

Target is 25% contamination or better. WRAP study of OTG found contamination rates ranged from 19%-87%, avg. 47% suggesting our bins are performing well.

Council has agreed to reskin 15 general waste bins in the new year, to increase network of recycling bins.



RECYCLE REWARD MACHINES

- There are four machines currently in use at Leeds Beckett University (2 machines), Trinity shopping centre, Kirkgate Market and a Shell Garage forecourt.
- Over 7000 items have been collected for recycling. Quality of recyclate is generally high.
- Trinity Kitchen machine is by far the most popular having collected >3000 items so far.
- Surveys with the public will be undertaken to seek feedback on the machines and motivations for use.



‘BUBBLE BINS’

We have developed 2 fun, playful ‘Bubble Bins’ as an addition to the new on street recycling bins.

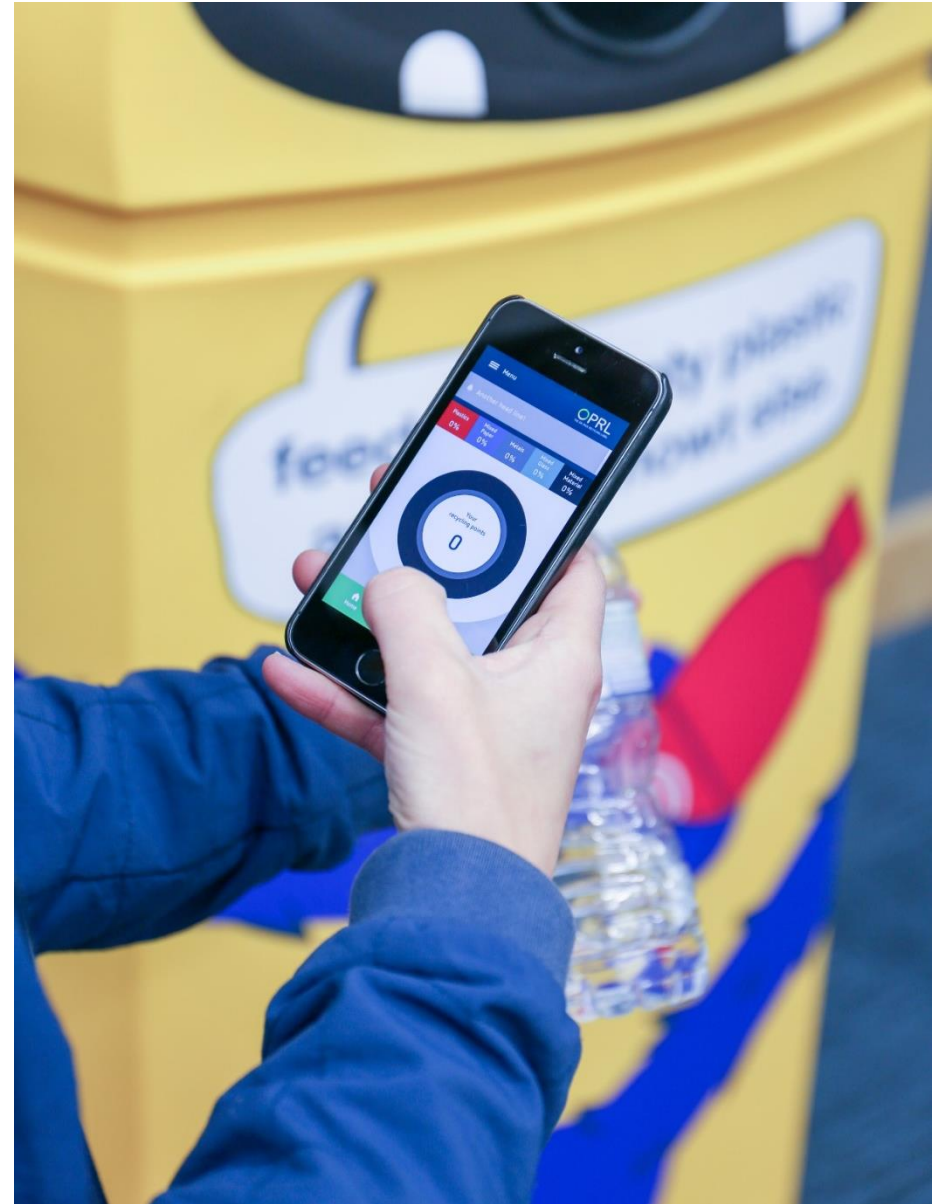
The bins burp and then blow bubbles when a plastic bottle or can is recycled in them.

These bins are being used to engage the public around Leeds at events and high footfall indoor areas and have proved to be very popular so far in Leeds, on social media and with the media.



‘WE RECYCLE’ APP

- As part of the trial we are testing the OPRL ‘We Recycle’ app in an on the go environment for the first time
- Users scan drinks packaging and the app tells them the closest recycling bin
- It is aimed at a young audience – under 35s who are the biggest consumers of food and drink on the go.
- So far usage has been low and we will conduct market research with the target audience to understand the barriers to usage.



CUP RECYCLING

Cup recycling is initially available in the following managed 'spaces' in Leeds city centre:

- Retailers – any cup can be recycled in Caffe Nero, Costa, McDonald's, Pret and Starbucks, Greggs
- Indoor cup bins are in place at:
 - 5 at Council buildings
 - 2 at Leeds Beckett University (they also have a recycle reward machine for cups)
 - 1 at Morrisons in the Merrion Centre
 - 3 at Trinity shopping centre
 - 2 at Leeds Uni
 - 1 at M&S on Briggate
 - 3 at Coop
 - Various offices
 - Additional in Trinity shopping centre



ON STREET CUP RECYCLING

- Surveys show around 9% of the contamination in plastic/ can bins is coffee cups, plus additional from leftover liquid
- Around 21% by volume of belly bin contents was also paper cups, demonstrating potential for recycling cups
- 5 Envirobank bins were installed at the end of November
- Cups are collected by Forge Recycling and sent to James Cropper in Cumbria for recycling
- Over 20,000 cups collected from 5 bins in 5 weeks
- Particularly effective around the train station
- Additional waste audits of the belly bins and plastic/can bins will now be undertaken to see whether the addition of cup bins reduces cup/liquid contamination.



MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Since the launch period (20 Oct – 9 Dec) the campaign has reached 1.1 million people on Twitter (4m total to date)
- Media coverage with BBC Look North, BBC Radio Leeds, Yorkshire Evening Post and recent filming with BBC War on Waste (Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall).

#leedsbyexample



Thank you

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[@HubbubUK](#)

