



Alternatives to single-use plastics

Now that [new legislation has been introduced](#) around the sale and use of single-use plastics, you'll need to start considering alternative items to use instead.

We've collated some information to help get you thinking about some of the different options available.

If you need some more information on alternatives to single use plastics, please contact the Climate Action Team on climate@kingston.gov.uk.

Information for suppliers

Reusable alternatives are best from both an economic and an environmental point of view.

Porcelain, glass and metal (e.g. steel) are all good options.

If you supply reusable hard plastic cups and tableware, make sure it's made from **polypropylene** which is a more environmentally friendly material (it can be reused, and also easily recycled).

Reusable plateware should always be encouraged as the most preferred option. In terms of single use items, the most environmentally friendly options are those that come from agricultural waste (things that are already destined to be disposed of - for example **bagasse** which is a byproduct of the sugarcane industry), trees or plants that grow very fast (for example **bamboo** or **hemp**), leaves (ideally fallen leaves for example **palm leaves**) and sustainably sourced **wood** or **paper**.

Paper is good and can go in paper/cardboard recycling if it is clean. However, it will not get recycled (and it may even cause contamination) if it is dirty. Your paper or card products should be clearly labelled with instructions to dispose of them in general waste if they are dirty.

Please remember that 'paper' cups for hot drinks are usually lined with plastic, and contribute to the growing plastic waste problem. There are emerging alternatives made of natural materials (including all the materials mentioned above). **Seaweed** is farmed but does not require land and grows quickly, and is able to provide coating for cups that has similar properties to plastic.

Have you heard about **edible tableware**? For example, plates made of **bran, pasta and grain** - you can eat from them, and eat them too!

Be careful as some chemically modified bioplastics (e.g. PLA) are included in the ban. These are plastics derived from natural materials that look and behave like plastic.

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Information for restaurants and cafes

Indoors

Reusable alternatives are best from both an economic and an environmental point of view.

For all food served indoors, make sure you use reusable tableware and cups e.g. **porcelain, glass** and **metal** (e.g. steel).

If you opt for reusable hard plastic cups and tableware, make sure it's made from **polypropylene** which is a more environmentally friendly material (it can be reused, and also easily recycled). Do not use plastics unless you are certain it will be reused many times, otherwise it is considered single-use and banned by the current regulations.

Takeaway

Opt for reusables if possible. There are several companies providing reusable takeaway containers that you could provide for a deposit. There are schemes whereby your customers could borrow a cup or container using an app, and return it to you or at a collection point, just like in the library. Those schemes are gaining popularity around the world, and the more companies decide to use them the better 'network effect' this will create to make returns easier.

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