



What are the Single use plastics and Plastic free messages?

Single Use Plastics (SUPs) – literally means a plastic item that you only use once and then throw away e.g. a straw.

Plastic free – takes this a step further and has become a term to describe the movement towards eliminating as much plastic as possible from our lives.

#PlasticFree^{GM}

Greater Manchester has launched the first city region wide pledge to drive down avoidable single use plastics such as straws, stirrers, take away containers etc. Plastic Free GM asks businesses, organisations and individuals to pledge to take action to reduce the use of such items across the city and to encourage the use of more sustainable options.

Hospitality and catering businesses are being encouraged to use paper straws and have adopted the use of the Manchester Bee straw!

Find out more about the Manchester Plastic free campaign...[Plastic free GM](#)

In recent years, there has been a rise in the number of campaigns and projects to highlight the issues of Single use plastics (SUP's) and to encourage a behaviour change towards a plastic free society. People have become increasingly concerned about plastics in the ocean systems and the amount of room that disposable plastics take up in their domestic general waste bins.

So how can individuals play their part?

The *Reduce Reuse Recycle* messages are as important to this issue as ever before:

- People could *reduce* their reliance on buying products in single use plastic,
- Instead, go for reusable / refillable items.

If you have to buy things in plastic – make sure it can be recycled (In GM only plastic bottles are collected in domestic recycling) or ensure that any plastic that is used is disposed of correctly to prevent littering and plastic entering the water cycle.(In Greater Manchester, any other plastics than bottles would need to be placed into the general waste bin)





Here are some ideas towards a plastic free lifestyle:

- Reusable/refillable water bottles – there is an app that tells you where you can refill for free: [Refill App](#)
- Use refillable coffee cups – many high street retailers are taking part in schemes where you can bring your own cup.
- There are schemes to encourage collection points for the disposable coffee cups where they do get recycled.
- Think about buying fruit and vegetables loose or in paper bags.
- Avoid packaging- look for items that you can buy without packaging
- Bag for life schemes
- Look for products that do not need plastic bottles such as using soap / solid shampoos/ body wash bars instead of body wash/shower gel bottles
- Use foil to wrap food items instead of cling film
- Look for items made from plastic alternatives such as reusable coffee cups / toothbrushes made from bamboo. Nevertheless, be careful, this does not mean that these are recyclable in your home collection service.

Where to shop?

- There are a growing number of “Refill” shops in GM- “Plentiful” Bury, “Plastic free shop” Manchester student university
- Many supermarkets are now encouraging people to ‘bring your own’ container or return packaging
- Sainsbury’s 2019 announced that they would be trialling a plastic packaging take back scheme. Where shoppers can unpack extra plastics and leave in shop for recycling. They are will also end the use of dark coloured plastic across fresh goods and removed all plastic packaging from Christmas crackers. Over 2019 it plans to continue to remove plastics from its products.

Local markets and retail initiatives

Altrincham Market:

- Provide free tap water to avoid plastic bottles
- Substituted buying drinks in plastic bottles for aluminium or glass, as they can capture these and ensure they are recycled

Packaging-free grocery stores:

- A Small Good thing (Bolton), Unicorn Grocery (Manchester).
- Provide reusable cloth bags, paper bags, reused cardboard and wooden crates to help reduce SUPs

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