



National Trust position statement on single use plastics

March 2018

The National Trust's Environmental Policy commits us to utilising every opportunity to minimise our use of non-renewable resources, and to minimise waste. Single use plastics represent a particular concern to use because of the environmental impact of their manufacture and disposal.

Matt Drew, Head of Food and Beverage at the National Trust said: "As a charity that looks after 775 miles of coastline, we are alarmed by the impact single use plastics have on our environment, our oceans and marine wildlife. We're committed to eliminating the use of single use plastic in our cafes and tea rooms, whilst ensuring that any disposable packaging we do use has as little impact on the environment as possible". The Trust is also taking similar steps across all its operations to remove single use plastics, and to minimise waste in general.

So far, the National Trust has taken the following steps to reduce and replacing single use and other damaging plastics:

- We have replaced all disposable food and drink packaging with products that are fully biodegradable, made from recycled and plant-based materials. This includes take-away coffee cups and lids, drinking straws and sandwich boxes already in use across its food outlets.
- Trialled a reusable hot drinks cup (made from bamboo and biodegradable) this spring and a full roll-out is anticipated later in the year, alongside a new refillable water flask.
- Continue to offer free drinking water as standard in our cafes and tea rooms.
- Removed single use plastic bags from our 275 shops, replacing them with recycled bags that are recyclable and designed for a long life span with multiple re-use. We also sell jute and fabric re-usable bags.
- We have switched our Magazine wrap from plastic to a potato starch wrap product which can be home composted, and we will continue to review whether there are better alternatives, or whether we need to wrap the Magazine at all.
- And we have switched to reusable plant pots and trays in our plant nursery.

Looking forward we are committed to achieving the following:

- Through the roll-out of the ethical and environmental standards for our retail products and packaging we will ensure that our shops are free of single use plastic by 2022.
- We will remove all single use plastic bottles in our cafes by 2022 – but for all our sit-down cafes we will swap to glass bottles by the end of 2018.
- We will investigate the alternatives for SUP in our plant nurseries and sales.
- We will publish our waste strategy by July 2018 which will set out how we intend to fulfil our environmental policy commitments to minimise waste.

Over 150 coastal NT properties are adjacent to beaches, many of which suffer from serious littering with plastics. Formal clean-up activities have taken place in past years and/or will take place in 2018, at over 40 of these beaches, in some cases as part of day-to-day management with staff and volunteers, and also through partnership arrangements with other organisations.

Beach cleans address the symptoms/results of plastics pollution but deliver other benefits including:

- Removing hazards for wildlife and humans
- Maintaining the aesthetic appearance of the beach
- Raising awareness at both local and national levels of the problem, which helps in the uptake of recommendations and actions to reduce litter

The environmental impact of plastics is a complex, global issue that requires collaboration throughout the supply chain and a significant amount of investment in industry to solve. We are working with our supply chain to encourage innovative solutions, and in the meantime, we'll do all we can to mitigate the impact of our own operations and investigate new ways to do this.