



The Top 5
swaps you
can make
this season

Plastic-free
hotspots
on your
doorstep

Plus:

How you can
shop for your
Xmas dinner,
plastic-free!



Manchester
Friends of the Earth Newsletter

PLASTIC-FREE CHRISTMAS

Every year, the UK
gives to landfill
for Christmas ...

6
MILLION
Christmas
Trees

Which only last
on average for
20 days!

230,000
TONNES
of food waste

1 in 5 people
admit to buying
food they don't
even like!

WHY NOT
MAKE SOME
PLASTIC-FREE
CHOICES THIS
YEAR?

125,000
TONNES
of plastic waste

50,000
TREES
worth of
Christmas
cards

1500
TONNES
of recyclable
fairy lights

227,000
MILES
of recyclable
wrapping
paper

Which is actually
only enjoyed
for an average
of 8 seconds!

Plastic-Free Living

.... Some rules to live by for a healthier planet!

When you hear about plastic-free living, your first thought is probably "I should really do that, to help the planet and all that, but...have you SEEN my supermarket?!" With plastic lining every shelf, and barely a naked carrot in sight, is reducing the amount of plastic we consume everyday even possible? YES! The argument is simple: We stop buying it, they will stop making it!

We have some simple rules to live by which will make it easier to reduce your plastic consumption until they do:



R EUSE

Reusables are the key to a plastic free life, one time investments which last for years, and work out cheaper very quickly. Steel water bottles, bags for life and glass jars.

R EFUSE

Learn to say no! Refuse plastic freebies, cheap disposable stuff and produce wrapped in plastic. They are not built to last and will quickly end up in landfills. Saying no will make manufacturers switch to more sustainable products for us to use.

R ECYCLE

Paper, glass and metal can be recycled into new products, but this still requires extra resources like water and power, so reusables are always better where possible.

R EDUCE

Declutter your life! Donating things you don't use to charity or selling it online is a great way of reducing plastic waste as it gives someone else a chance to buy it without another having to be made!

R OT

Any natural materials like paper, cardboard and food waste can be composted to become soil to grow new food and materials!

Water bottle!



Bag for life!



Mason jars



HOW TO SHOP FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS DINNER Plastic-Free

In today's overpackaged world, it may seem impossible to even consider finding a naked vegetable in the Christmas chaos, but I promise it's easier than you think! We have 5 easy tips to reduce harmful packaging this year and make this Christmas a celebration for the planet we live on too!

- ① **Plan Ahead:** Think about what you usually make for Christmas dinner and make a list of what you need! Not only does this help you figure out what you can buy plastic-free in advance or where you need to shop for loose veg, it is usually cheaper and makes the holidays so much less stressful! Bonus!
- ② **Support Small Local Business:** Local markets are the best place to find loose veg at low prices. Buying produce like this not only guarantees freshness but also allows you to buy just what you need, **reducing food waste!**
- ③ **Stick to Eco-friendly Materials:** If there are some things you can't avoid buying in packaging, a great rule is to choose natural materials, such as glass jars & bottles, tins, foil, ceramic, paper containers and cardboard. These are all recyclable or will biodegradable naturally!
- ④ **Shop Online:** Dry ingredients like herbs, spices, tea, coffee, pasta, rice and more can be purchased online from websites like **PlasticFreePantry.co.uk** in advance!
- ⑤ **Relax:** Do your best, but don't stress if you can't get everything plastic-free! The goal is to reduce plastic pollution as much as we can manage.

Fancy something different this year?
Try the Vegan Roast Wellington pictured above
from the Avant-Garde Vegan's new book!
"VEGAN CHRISTMAS"



Plastic-Free Map

Below are various locations around Manchester which sell plastic-free food, beauty products, and cleaning supplies, with more and more plastic-free locations popping up every week!

PlasticFreePantry

An online plastic free goods delivery service which have a large stock of organic products and offer a 10% discount if you pick up 10 pieces of litter!

See their website for more details:
PlasticFreePantry.co.uk

Gronn Hairdressers
Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat
64 Bolton Street, Bury
www.gronn.co.uk

Village Greens
Open 7 days a week
Unit 1, Longfield Centre,
Prestwich
www.village-greens-coop.co.uk

Seastraws Local campaign

Seastraw, is a local campaign group that works with pubs, bars, restaurants and other businesses to avoid single-use plastic and help businesses move to sustainable alternatives.

They have recently reached 100 businesses that have pledged to reduce plastic use. For more details on the campaign, who has pledged and how you can get involved.

See www.seastraw.co.uk

Online Shops:

PlasticFreePantry.co.uk
Online Shop

theeldertreepantry.co.uk
Online Shop

M20refills.co.uk
Online Shop

Kenyon Hall Farm Shop
Open 7 days a week
Winwick Lane, Croft,
Warrington, WA3 7ED

Repair Cafe
Once a month
527B Wilbraham Road,
Chorlton
stitchedup.coop

8th Day
Open 6 days a week
111 Oxford Road, M1 7DU
www.8thday.coop

Unicorn Grocery

A groceries based in Chorlton, Manchester. Unicorn works hard to reduce the environmental impact of its packaging. It offers shoppers plastic-free packaged fruit and veg, the option of re-using plastic food pots in their deli and minimally packaged dried goods. They have recently installed a water re-fill station and plan to introduce a bag deposit scheme.

For further details see
<https://www.unicorn-grocery.coop/packaging-choices/>

Lush Cosmetics
Open 7 days a week
Arndale Centre,
Manchester

Flourish Foods Shop
1st - 2nd December
Vegan Christmas Festival
Victoria Baths
www.flourishmcr.co.uk

Levenshulme Market
1st, 8th, 15th & 21st December
Stockport Road
levymarket.com

Levenshulme's Village Store

Across Greater Manchester stores are opening to offer customers plastic-free alternatives to the big supermarkets' excessive packaging.

One such gem is the Village Stores in Levenshulme where much of their stock is offered on a re-fill or loose basis, substantially reducing plastic packaging.

Mustafa and his family have run the shop for over 12 years and have always offered dried goods in this way. They also offer refillable laundry/ washing up liquids and many soaps and toiletries.

Items on offer include - pasta, quinoa, rice, porridge, couscous, muesli and most importantly bombay mix!

For more details and opening times see:
<http://www.village-stores.com>

6 Plastic-Free swaps to try this Christmas!

Recycled Christmas Cards

If you want to send new cards try buying cards printed on recycled, uncoated cardboard.

But if you really want to cut down on waste, send e-cards.

If you're a bit old-school about these things, get yourself a pad of the Friends of the Earth re-use labels and give last year's Christmas cards a new lease of life.



Mince pies and Christmas nibbles

Make your home smell of Christmas by following mum's organic mince pie recipe. There are equally tantalising recipes for vegan mince pies.

While you're at it, bake festive cookies and sing along to Christmas tunes you would never publicly admit to liking!

For chocolate, buy bars wrapped in recyclable paper, like Divine chocolate.



Edible Christmas Decorations

What's better than pretty Christmas decorations? Pretty delicious ones that you can eat.

Things like tinsel and baubles are normally full of plastic. A tasty alternative is to hang home-baked Christmas cookies from the tree.

Strings of popcorn and cranberries also add a bit of sparkle.



Christmas Wrapping Paper

Lots of wrapping paper contains plastic. Go for the elegance of brown parcel paper – adding natural decorations like sprigs or homemade cookies

Or even decorate the paper with potato prints. You'll need a potato, a blunt knife to carve your festive design and vegetable-based ink to make your print.

Or design your own range of child-friendly versions like these.

As the song goes, "brown paper packages tied up with strings, these are a few of my favourite things".



Christmas Roast

Meat-free recipes are much easier to get plastic-free! Check out where you can find our favourite on page 2!



Presents for bigger kids & adults

Save yourself the job of wrapping present after present. Why not gift them an experience instead?

Think about their interests and hobbies. Who are their favourite bands? Which is their favourite restaurant? Is there somewhere in the UK they'd love to visit?

Film buffs and gallery geeks will bite your hand off for annual memberships.



Manchester Friends of the Earth's plastic-free campaign

Reported by Samaa Ajel

Our Plastic-free campaign was started by one of our members who, newly arrived in Manchester, was shocked at the city's waste problem – takeaway containers strewn over pavements, plastic bottles on buses, you know what it's like.

As a start, we created a leaflet and spent time at Levenshulme market to raise awareness of plastic as a global and local problem. We gathered consumer support encouraging local takeaways to switch to more eco-friendly packaging. Despite getting lots of signatures, we had only a few of them for each takeaway and encouraging change was difficult.

So we took time to decide on a more realistic plan of action for reducing plastic in Manchester and teamed up with interested individuals and groups to work with local councils on their Plastic Free Greater Manchester campaign to encourage them to enforce tighter waste regulations in the hospitality industry.

We have researched the best eco-friendly materials, the ones with the lowest carbon-emissions at prices, so businesses could be better informed and in a position to change their packaging.

Our plans are now to visit businesses, encouraging them to make the switch. In recognition of their changes they will be given a rating to publicly display.

This will also help customers know which restaurants, bars and takeaways are more proactive in trying to reduce their impact on our

environment, and therefore more deserving of their money. We will regularly update our guides on which materials are less carbon-intensive so we remain reliable advisors to businesses and customers.

The campaign aims, in collaboration with councils, to reduce waste in the hospitality industry across Greater Manchester. This is one step of the many changes that we need to make as a society to reduce our impact on the environment and help prevent catastrophic climate change.

You can be part of this shift by coming to our meetings, every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 7pm-9pm and find out what you can do and how to get those around you on board! See our website www.manchesterfoe.org.uk for more details about this campaign and the many other ways that you and your loved ones can get involved.

PLASTIC TERMINOLOGY

Degradable plastic breaks down over a number of years resulting in small bits of plastic that do not compost. Degradable plastic cannot be recycled with conventional plastic due to its fragmentation over time.

Biodegradable materials break down by the action of living organisms. This may take a long time and result in toxic residues and tiny pieces of plastic.

Compostable materials break down within a short time period in industrial composting conditions without toxic residues. They can be disposed of with food waste. They also embed less carbon than conventional plastic. Compostable materials often meet the EN 13432 standard.

Greater Manchester recycling



One solution to reducing plastic waste and its impact on the environment is to recycle it; but how does this work in Greater Manchester?

Recent research by our waste authority tell us that a whopping 86% of people in Greater Manchester add one or more item to their recycling collection that is not accepted locally.

Generally whether a plastic item can be recycled depends on the facilities set up in a local area, and this in turn depends on there being an economically viable end point for that type of plastic. Unfortunately often there is not.

We spoke to the Recycle for Greater Manchester team for some clarity on the do's and don'ts of plastic recycling in a residential setting. Their service picks up waste from all GM boroughs except Wigan who run under a different contract.

In addition the commercial and construction industry make their own arrangements.

Their top tips for plastics in our area are:

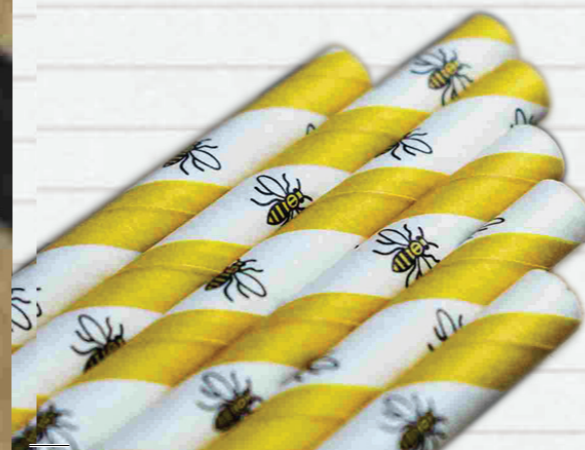
All types of plastic bottles go in the mixed recycling bin including drinks bottles, milk bottles, cleaning product bottles, trigger spray bottles and shampoo and shower gel bottles. Do not be guided by the recycle numbers printed onto each item.

Remember to remove the plastic lids and tops as these need to go in the general waste bin.

All other types of plastic such as plastic bags, packaging, pots, tubs and trays go in the general waste bin.

Much plastic not recycled is unfortunately incinerated for electricity production, which Friends of the Earth considers environmentally worse than diverting this waste to landfill.

By far the better solution is to avoid where possible the use of these items in the first place.





Manchester Friends of the Earth is an award-winning environmental group creatively campaigning on local, national and international issues. We are fuelled by volunteer energy and funded by membership subscriptions and donations.

As well as our plastic-free work, we are also involved in anti-fracking and divestment campaigning and are working to encourage the Greater Manchester authorities to take action on air pollution, protecting nature and improving the provision of sustainable transport.



**Friends of
the Earth
Manchester**

For more information on our work and how you can get involved see:

www.manchesterfoe.org.uk

Facebook - manchesterfoe

Twitter @mcrfoe

We hope you have enjoyed reading the plastic-free edition of our Magazine.

Comments and ideas for future copies most welcome!

Thank you to Georgie, Chris, Steve, Damian, Pete,
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