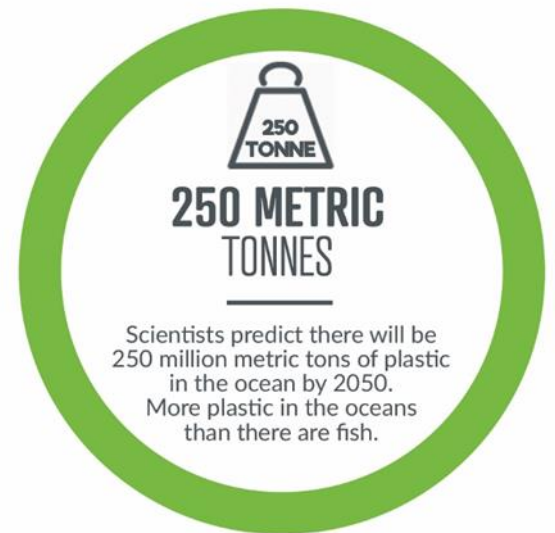


Fact Sheet Take away cups Cold Drinks



“Scientists predict there will be 250 million metric tons of plastic in the ocean by 2050.”

Raise a low carbon glass!

As well as being sustainable, we want Greater Manchester to be a safe place to enjoy yourself.

Concerns about public safety have led to licensing conditions for some bars and pubs stating that they must use plastic alternatives to glass for drinks taken outside, for drinks served after a certain time, or for all drinks. For example, at some larger gig venues where it's difficult to maintain a security presence in the middle of the crowd.

For plastic pint pots there aren't any great options at the moment in disposables. This product really highlights the need to move to reusable options where possible.

The PlasticFreeGM campaign is currently investigating how we can help businesses to make reusable beer cup schemes easier and better, and we hope to bring some good solutions to the city-region soon.

#PlasticFreeGM

Sustainability rating
Red, amber, green

Green:

A great sustainable choice.
Good work.



Amber:

Doing well but room for improvement.
Move towards a green choice.




Red:

Not a good choice for the planet.
Move to an amber choice.
Or even better a green choice.



Making sustainable choices

Your choice	Our rating	Things to consider
We offer reusable cold drinks cups to customers for free or on a deposit return scheme.	 Green. A great sustainable choice.	As a rule, reusable is always a better option than disposable. Could your business offer a deposit return scheme like the Manchester Christmas markets do every year?

We stock PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic single-use cold drinks cups. And our business separates these cups from all other types of waste, including all other types of plastic waste, so that the cups can be collected and recycled through a dedicated recycling service like Closed Loop.



Amber.
Doing well but room for improvement.

This is where things get tricky. Usually, the single-use plastic option is one of the worst. But single-use plastic pint pots and half pints are the exception that demonstrate how complicated the issue can be. It's essential to consider not just what you buy, but also where it will go once it's been used.

If your business invests in a dedicated service that allows you to separate your single-use PET plastic pint pots and half pints from everything else. And those plastics go to a service like 'Closed Loop' where the cups can be re-made into another cup. Then the single-use plastic version is the best of a bad bunch in terms of single-use items. This is because other options have very few services in place to compost or recycle.

We stock disposable cold drinks cups that are made from PLA (plant-based plastic material) where the packaging states 100% compostable. Packaging must state EN13432 standard for compostability.



Red.
Not a good choice for the planet.

On first glance PLA seems like a sustainable option. But PLA only breaks down under specific conditions like industrial composting, so it won't break down in a traditional compost heap. PLA is not accepted by most domestic or commercial composting services. PLA cannot go into the plastic recycling bin and can cause whole batches of plastic recycling to be rejected.

We stock disposable cold drinks cups made from card with a plastic lining. For example, the soft drinks take-away cups found commonly at fast food restaurants. If you're unsure what the products you stock are made from check the box or ask your supplier.



Red.
Not a good choice for the planet.

These products have similar issues to disposable coffee cups. It is difficult to separate the plastic lining from the card, so these cups cannot go into card and paper recycling bins as they will contaminate the recycling. This can lead to the whole batch being rejected. There are some specific services now that will collect plastic lined disposable cups and make sure they get recycled, like Simply Cups. See note below.

We stock single-use cold drinks cups made from plastic and have no specific service in place to separate them from all other waste and ensure that they are recycled.



Red.
Not a good choice for the planet.

This option has ended up at the bottom of the pile in terms of sustainable choices, but that's because it can be difficult or expensive to do the right thing with plastic, not because it's impossible.

Disposable plastic cups are not recycled in standard dry mixed recycling services for businesses. And are not suitable for residents' plastic recycling bins at home.

Plastic cups can be recycled by dedicated services like Closed Loop - see note below for more detail.

Dedicated plastic cup recycling services.

Recyclable versus recycled

The fact that a product has the word recyclable stamped on it doesn't mean that it is easily or widely recyclable. Or that if you drop it in your recycling bin at home or at work it will get recycled. Because of the processes used at recycling plants a product is only likely to get recycled if it comes in large quantities and can be separated from other products that are made of different types or grades of plastic. Always check with your service provider what they can accept for recycling.

Closed Loop

There are dedicated services, like [Closed Loop](#), that will ensure that recyclable single-use plastic cups are recycled, if staff can

separate them from everything else. At the moment this is one of the more sustainable options if you're a business using disposables. This is because the PLA (plant-based bio plastics) cold drinks cups aren't accepted by most waste management services, and cause problems if they end up in plastic recycling batches.

This is a good example of where we need to consider the whole lifecycle of the products that we buy and use. While it may seem more sustainable to buy in 100% compostable products, most of these items don't get recycled or composted and can have a higher carbon footprint than plastic ones.

Tell people you have made a change

If you switch to some of the sustainable behaviours above, make sure you put up a sign or tweet about it. This will let your customers know that you are making a positive shift to help the environment in Greater Manchester. Remember to include [#PlasticFreeGM](#) and [@GMGreenCity](#) in your tweets so we can retweet you.

