

Single Use Plastics Reduction Plan

2023 - 2024

This reduction plan targets the top 5 most procured single-use plastic items (by weight) in Gather & Gather's operations at UCL.

Identifying and reduction of single-use plastic is a key metric of Gather & Gather's performance at UCL.

Student Food Ambassadors were given the opportunity to assist Gather & Gather in identifying the top 5 most procured single-use plastic items and researching opportunities for reduction.

This reduction plan has been written with the recommendations from the Sustainable Food Ambassadors in mind as well as operational and financial restrictions.

Method of Identification

Students were given procurement data from January 2022- late November 2022 and were supported as they calculated the total volume of items procured and then the weight of plastic per item.

Identified Top 5 Single-Use Plastic Items

Product Type	Weight of Plastic
Coffee Cup Lid	326.4
Hygiene Gloves	311.5
PET Dairy Milk Bottles	296.1
Coffee Cup	210
Allergen Labels	80

Coffee Cup Lids & Coffee Cups

Methods to reduce total weight of plastic

We will engage a two prong approach to reduce the single-use plastic associated with coffee cup lids. Firstly, continue to invest in ways to increase use of reusables and secondly, invest in innovative packaging with lower % of plastic content.

Customer Behavior Change

1. Support the increase of the disposable cup tax to 50p
2. Remove disposable cups from view
3. Introduce ceramic cups to all cafes on campus
4. Launch new comms campaign to encourage club zero awareness on campus

Staff Behavior Change

1. Run an internal circular cup barista competition to promote positive attitudes to circular cups
2. Develop circular cup promotional training for baristas

Packaging Innovation

Lids -

1. Paper and bio-plastic composite lids are available through our procurement and reduce the weight of plastic per lid by 2.9g

Cups -

Student Ambassadors identified aqueous lined coffee cups – their recommendations have been passed on to central CH&CO procurement who are exploring business opportunities. These cups can be disposed of in the recycling stream at UCL as long as they are empty (but they can be dirty). Butterfly cups in particular are interesting as they also remove the need for lids or straws. G&G is already in talks with Easipac.

Timeline (2023)

Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
<p>Introduce ceramic cups to all cafes on campus</p> <p>Remove circular cups from customer eye-line in every café</p> <p>Run circular cup competition for Baristas on campus</p>	<p>Introduce new cup lids with significantly less plastic content (original = 3g, new lids = 1.5g)</p> <p>Support student researchers in the Bartlett with their circular food/drink packaging project</p> <p>Work with SU to assess the success of SU 50p cup tax versus G&G 25p cup tax .</p>	<p>Launch new comms campaign to encourage club zero awareness on campus (assets already designed and printed).</p> <p>Work with waste management company to build SOP for campus/MRF around new aqueous lined cups to ensure they are recycled.</p> <p>Knowledge share with the Students Union to encourage harmonised campus-wide implementation of the product.</p> <p>Support the 50p cup charge based on results from Q2 monitoring. Funds raised to be invested in circular behaviour promotion and enablement. .</p>	<p>Introduce new aqueous lined coffee cups and lids to campus removing SUP from these products</p>

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Hygiene Gloves

Methods to reduce total weight of plastic

We will engage a behavior change approach to reduce the single-use plastic associated with hygiene gloves as well as investigating product innovation to increase recycling potential of the plastic.

Behavior Change

1. Managers will be given responsibility to ensure that blue gloves are no longer used as standard. Policy developed that blue gloves are used only in the case of allergen contamination risk and in case of worker cutting/burning themselves.

Product Innovation

1. CH&CO procurement will investigate recyclable blue gloves for introduction to the CH&CO supply chain. G&G will work with UCL to ensure that this waste stream can be accepted at UCL.

Timeline (2023)

Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
<p>Monthly - procurement of gloves monitored and sites ordering excessive quantities reprimanded.</p> <p>Managers reminded through email-blast that blue gloves are only for emergencies and should not be worn as standard.</p>	<p>Monthly - procurement of gloves monitored and sites ordering excessive quantities reprimanded</p>	<p>Monthly - procurement of gloves monitored and sites ordering excessive quantities reprimanded.</p> <p>Product identification of recyclable gloves and operational usability trialled. Collaboration with UCL waste management systems to ensure that recyclability of product is retained.</p> <p>Knowledge share with the Students Union.</p>	<p>Monthly - procurement of gloves monitored and sites ordering excessive quantities reprimanded.</p> <p>Introduce recyclable blue hygiene gloves to campus for food-service.</p>

Allergen Labels

Methods to reduce total weight of plastic

We will engage with product innovation and experimentation to reduce the plastic associated with allergen labels, specifically the labels used in the BOH kitchen areas.

There are a number of solutions on the market including: reusable allergen labels (Remarkable or Puracycle), paper based labels. We will start with reusable allergen labels and trial this, due to their high price point, keeping track of loss-rate will be instrumental in our decision to keep using them.

n.b. this will be focused on back-of-house labelling not consumer facing labelling.

Product Innovation

1. Work with CH&Co to ensure steady supply of puracycle reusable allergen labels
2. Trial the allergen labels in the Wilkins Refectory, keeping track of loss-rate.
3. Roll out across campus.

Timeline (2023)

Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
	Contact CH&Co procurement and flag supply issues Order in the labels & brief the teams	Launch trial of reusable allergen labels over the summer. Ensure loss-rate is captured.	Based on success of trial, assess financials, and then roll out across campus kitchens.

Milk Bottles

Assessment

There are three current packaging options partially available to CH&CO, **HDPE (plastic) milk bottles, glass bottles, and composite packaging (tetrapak)**. Each packaging material has their own issues and are could be available to Gather & Gather at UCL.

1. Glass bottles have a higher carbon footprint than HDPE due to the heavier weight of transport, washing associated with reuse and energy intensive recycling process. However they contain no plastic, and the milk carries a high price point. Our supply chain currently does not offer milk in glass, however, there are market options that could be explored.
2. Tetrapak has (arguably) a lower carbon footprint than HDPE, and has a 75% lower plastic content than HDPE, however, they are not as easily recycled, and cannot be recycled into the same product. There are currently no dairy milk suppliers offering dairy milk in composite packaging, however, there are collaborations in retail on the horizon.
3. HDPE is the most widely recycled form of plastic in the UK, since the majority of the UK dairy industry supply their product in this packaging it allows us flexibility to offer the best price to our customers and source the highest quality product for UCL.

Methods to reduce total weight of plastic

For now, we will not engage with any packaging innovation to reduce the amount of plastic from our dairy milk supply chain, we will wait until the supply chain has more opportunities for us to engage with suppliers using Tetrapak.

However, a win-win situation would be to increase the % of our milk sold in coffees to alternative milks which are delivered in tetrapak, this would simultaneously support decarbonization of the food & drink sales at UCL.

Behavior Change

1. Engage baristas in the challenge to increase the % of hot drinks sold with alternative milks.
2. Engage senior leadership with increase of hot drinks sold with alternative milks (plastic & carbon reduction).
3. Engage customers to choose alternative milks - animal welfare, carbon reduction.

Timeline (2023)

Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
<p>Monthly-track procurement of dairy and oat milk</p> <p>Track sales of dairy and oat milk lattes</p>	<p>Monthly-track procurement of dairy and oat milk</p> <p>Track sales of dairy and oat milk lattes</p>	<p>Spot-light on plant-based milks and the carbon/animal welfare impact of dairy milk during Q3 team strategy day.</p> <p>Monthly-track procurement of dairy and oat milk</p> <p>Track sales of dairy and oat milk lattes</p> <p>Introduce target for oat milk sales - 50%</p>	<p>Launch Barista oat milk competition (similar to club zero) - ties to target for oat milk sales of 50%</p> <p>During Welcome week - run a campaign around alternative milk being same price as dairy milk. Animal welfare & carbon reduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable coffee on campus (Fairtrade, Club Zero and Oat Milk). <p>Monthly-track procurement of dairy and oat milk</p> <p>Track sales of dairy and oat milk hot drinks</p>