PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITIES

SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE

Freeing where we live from single-use





SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE

COMMUNITY TOOLKIT



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WELCOME



We're creating the Plastic Free Community network to free where we live from single-use. Together we're tackling avoidable single-use plastic, from beaches, rivers, and green spaces all the way back to the brands and businesses who create it. Wherever you live, whether you're on shore or inland, urban or rural, high-tide or high-rise, we're uniting communities in the fight against single-use plastics. It's not about removing all plastic from our lives. It's about kicking our addiction to avoidable single-use plastic, and changing the system that produces it.
Thank you for joining us.

Let's free where we live from single-use,
one plastic bottle at a time.



THE PROBLEM:

AVOIDABLE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

Plastic pollution has sadly become synonymous with any outdoor activity, from surfing to swimming, walking to climbing or wildlife watching – it is simply an predictable part of the experience. It is an issue that connects the environment with all parts of society. It is something that we can all take action on at every level. In fact, it is only through concrete, collective, positive action that will we be able to stop the flood of plastic pollution from overwhelming our world.

The ocean sustains us, our wellbeing and our planet. We want to create thriving oceans and thriving people. This is why plastic pollution, and specifically tackling society's throwaway culture, is a top priority for Surfers Against Sewage. Our ambition is to completely rid our beaches of single-use, avoidable plastic. But it isn't just about cleaning up our environment, it's about protecting it for future generations. 99% of plastic is fossil fuel derived and carbon emissions from plastic production are set to more than triple by 2050**

Hundreds of coastal and inland communities have already embraced the vision to create Plastic Free Communities. You are joining a global coming-together of citizens, communities, businesses and government to create a cleaner future for our oceans.

THANK YOU



** Stats: Centre of International Environmental Law, May 2019

CREATING PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITIES

Action is needed now. Through this Community Toolkit you will learn how to help free where you live from single-use. The team of experts at SAS HQ have developed five objectives that serve as qualifying criteria for becoming an Approved Plastic Free Community. These include spreading the word throughout your community, committing businesses to ditching single-use plastic, forming the backbone of your community group and getting local authorities on board.

We want your journey towards Plastic Free Community Approved status to be fun and rewarding. Remember that small changes can make a huge difference. Keep it simple and you can make change happen.

TOP TIP

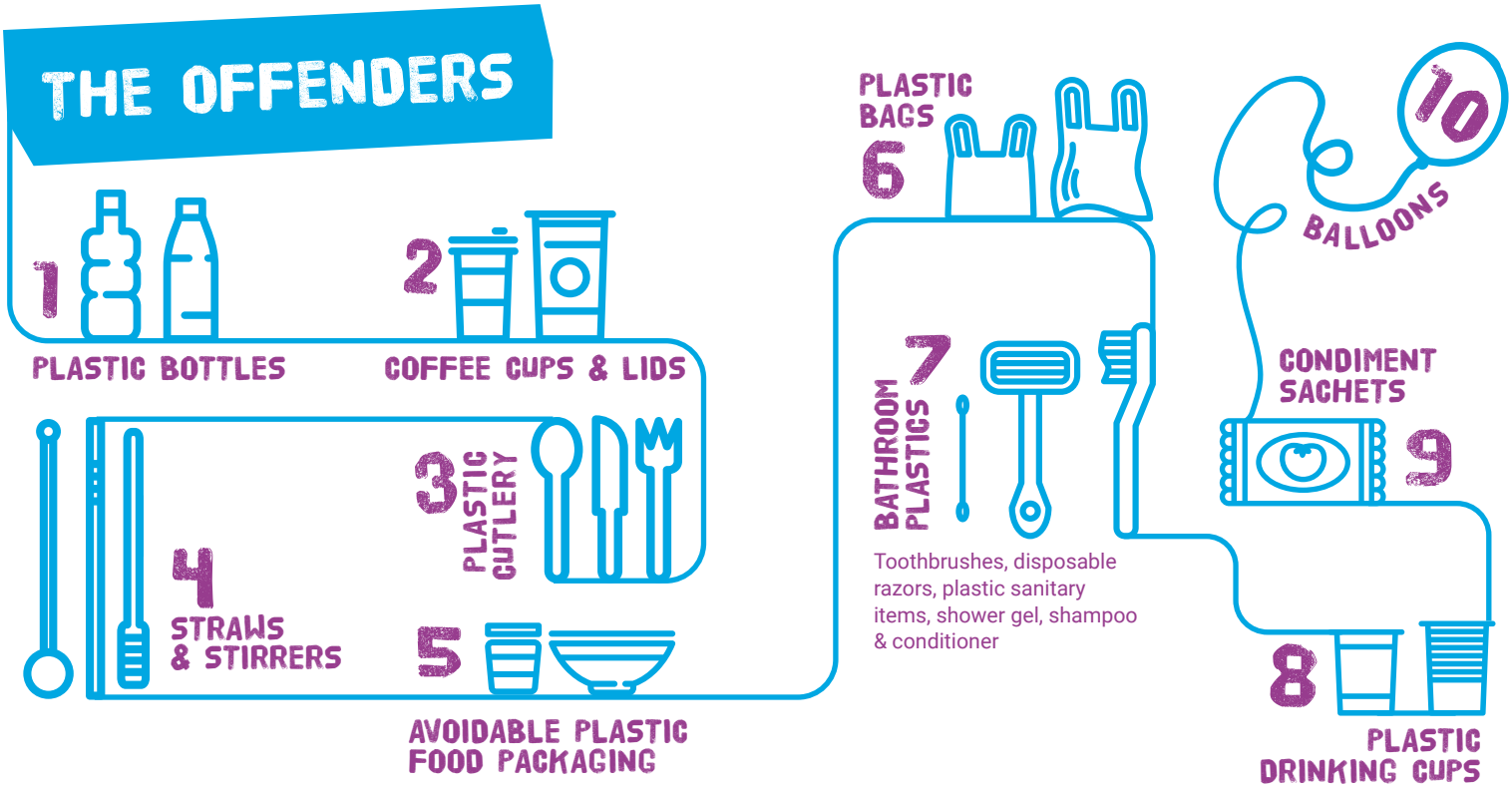
Read your Community Leader Toolkit for advice on how to get your local campaign off the ground



REMEMBER YOUR INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS:



THE OFFENDERS



1. 38.5 million plastic bottles are bought every day in the UK. Around half end up in landfill, being burnt or in the environment.
2. In the UK, we use 7 million disposable coffee cups every day.
3. Food and drink-related plastic items now make up one in every five pieces of litter.
4. Plastic straws are in the top 10 items polluting the ocean and harming marine life. As of April 2020 these are banned.
5. UK Supermarkets distribute 112,000 pieces of plastic packaging per minute.
6. Plastic bags can kill marine wildlife by unintentional digestion or inhalation.
7. 28 wet wipes are found per mile of beach. 93% of sewer blockages are made up of wipes.
8. It's thought between five and 13 million tonnes of plastic end up in the ocean every year. Refuse single-use.
9. Sachets can take 300 years to break down.
10. 1 in 3 seabirds which die are found to have balloons in their stomachs.

HOW TO USE YOUR TOOLKIT

On each page of this toolkit you will find an objective that needs to be met in order to achieve Plastic Free Communities Approved status.

The toolkit shows you the requirements for each objective and a summary of how to achieve them. It gives you a framework to follow and tips and advice to enable you to establish your own local plastic-free network, in the best way suited to your community. Guidance on applying for Plastic Free Community Approved status is found at the end of the toolkit.

This toolkit is to be used alongside the full set of Plastic Free Communities toolkits, which you will be sent on registering with SAS. These include more detailed guidance on how to lead local action, how to achieve the objectives and how to engage your community through communications and events.

Don't be daunted! The movement is growing in strength every day and we have your back.

TOOLKIT TIPS

1. **GET STARTED** read your 'Leading a Community' toolkit. Think about who you want on your initial plastic free group to help you get things off the ground.
2. **KNOW YOUR STUFF** listen to the SAS Plastic Free Communities Podcasts you have been sent on each objective and read your resource pack.
3. **MEET UP** share the resources and break down the objectives with your team, developing a plan to meet each objective individually.
4. **KEEP IT SIMPLE** start with the easiest objective first and get some movement – progress will get attention and keep plastic-free morale high.
5. **SPREAD THE WORD** use your Community Leader, Social Media and Talking Points toolkits to shout about what you are doing. The more people know, the more support you'll gain.
6. **KEEP NOTES** take minutes, log evidence and keep pictures/media cuttings. Share this info with SAS HQ every quarter, this evidence is needed to accomplish your award!

OBJECTIVE:

COMMUNITY ACTION & EVENTS

REQUIREMENTS:

At least two community events organised by your Plastic Free Community group and made open for all to attend, in one calendar year.

WHY?

The more people who participate in Plastic Free Communities, the more awareness you raise and the more action on the ground you can take. Community ownership and empowerment creates a movement everyone can feel part of and contribute to. Through community action you can contribute to Citizen Science and SAS campaigns to influence government and industry.



HOW?

1. Sign up to run an SAS Beach/Community Clean (details here: www.sas.org.uk)
2. Hold a Mass Unwrap (see your Mass Unwrap Toolkit!)
3. Hold an SAS fundraiser to support the Plastic Free Communities campaign.
4. The sky is your limit! Use your imagination and creativity to engage your community.
5. Take photos and cover it on social media. You'll need evidence to apply!



TIPS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION & EVENTS

1. SIGN UP TO RUN AN SAS BEACH CLEAN OR COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP EVENT
2. HOLD AN SAS FUNDRAISING EVENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY
3. CREATE A PRESENCE AT LOCAL FESTIVALS AND ENCOURAGE ORGANISERS TO GO PLASTIC FREE

FREE WHERE YOU LIVE





REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUPS

2.5 billion throwaway coffee cups are used in the UK every year.

Coffee cups are often non-recyclable due to a thin plastic film lining the inside. Many cafes and coffee chains offer a discount to those bringing their own reusable cup!

Take advantage of a cheaper coffee!

OBJECTIVE:

COMMUNITY ALLIES

REQUIREMENTS:

To demonstrate diverse community involvement in order to spread the plastic free message. To engage as many groups and organisations as possible through action, events and awareness raising. A target will be set depending on your community population size.

WHY?

Working together as a community makes you stronger... and whole community action is key to a successful Plastic Free Community. Ensuring as many people as possible are aware of the plastic crisis and how they can take action offers the best chance for change. This objective is about reaching out and working with other people to strengthen your message.

HOW?

Link up with as many sectors of your community as you can and get them to make the Plastic Free Communities Pledge. Action on this objective also includes things like holding events, doing talks, running workshops and generally raising awareness.



STEPS

1. Read your Community Allies Toolkit and identify your key allies.
2. Your target will depend on your community population size.
3. You should include an equal mix of:
   - Schools, Colleges and Universities
   - Community Spaces (such as libraries, leisure centres, venues and halls)
   - Community Organisations
   - Community Events
   - Community Communications
   - For populations of over 100,000, a flagship employer (e.g. university, hospital or business with 100+ staff)
4. Get your Allies to sign the Plastic Free Communities Pledge.
5. Link with your Allies to run talks, events and projects to engage the community.

POPULATION	ALLY TARGET
0 > 2,500	5
2,500 > 5,000	10
5,000 > 10,000	15
10,000 > 20,000	20
20,000 > 50,000	30
50,000 > 75,000	40
75,000 > 100,000	50
100,000 > 125,000	60
125,000 > 150,000	70
150,000 > 200,000	90
200,000 > 250,000	110
250,000 > 300,000	130
300,000 > 400,000	170
400,000 > 500,000	210
> 500,000+	250

We look at communities individually so if you don't have enough allies in any of the categories, don't worry! We will work with you to reach your target.

TIPS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

1. LINK UP WITH OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS SO THAT YOU'RE ALL WORKING TOGETHER
2. RUN TALKS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
3. INVITE SCHOOLS TO RUN THE SAS PLASTIC FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

LOVE MY COMMUNITY. HATE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC





REFUSE SINGLE-USE BATHROOM PLASTICS

4.3 billion disposable menstrual products are used in the UK every year, and the majority are plastic.

It's thought 700,000 panty liners, 2.5 million tampons and 1.4 million pads are flushed down the toilet every DAY in the UK.* Encourage alternatives for #plasticfreeperiods and ask people to Think Before You Flush.

* Stats: City to Sea

OBJECTIVE:

BUSINESS CHAMPIONS

REQUIREMENTS:

At least three single-use plastic items removed from local businesses and a plan in place to identify and tackle the rest. A target will be set depending on your community population size.

WHY?

Removing the option to purchase and/or use single-use plastics is the easiest way to avoid them. Promoting refill and reuse options to customers will help bring about a change in behaviour and reduce waste in our society.

HOW?

Businesses identify the single-use plastic items they use and/or give out, and draw up a list to tackle. Once they have removed three items they can become an SAS Plastic Free Champion. You can retro-fit previous action.

NB: This award is only for local, independently owned SMEs.



STEPS

1. Read your Business Toolkit and share it with local, independent businesses.
2. Visit businesses in person, spot existing positive action and encourage them to build on it.
3. Focus on removal and refill/reuse. Don't replace one single use problem with another!
4. Apply to SAS HQ to award your businesses its Plastic Free Champion status.
5. Encourage Champions to display their plaque and certificate to inspire others.



POPULATION	BUSINESS TARGET
0 > 2,500	2
2,500 > 5,000	3
5,000 > 10,000	5
10,000 > 20,000	6
20,000 > 50,000	12
50,000 > 75,000	24
75,000 > 100,000	30
100,000 > 125,000	34
125,000 > 150,000	38
150,000 > 200,000	42
200,000 > 250,000	46
250,000 > 300,000	50
300,000 > 400,000	55
400,000 > 500,000	60
> 500,000+	70

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

1. POP IN AND HAVE A CHAT. SIGN THEM UP AND GIVE THEM A COPY OF THE SAS BUSINESS TOOLKIT
2. KEEP IN TOUCH, ENCOURAGE THEM AND CHAMPION WHAT THEY ARE DOING ON SOCIAL MEDIA
3. MAKE IT EASY! GET THEM TO TACKLE THE THREE EASIEST ITEMS FIRST AND DRAW UP A PLAN FOR THE REST

SINGLE-USE IS NO USE

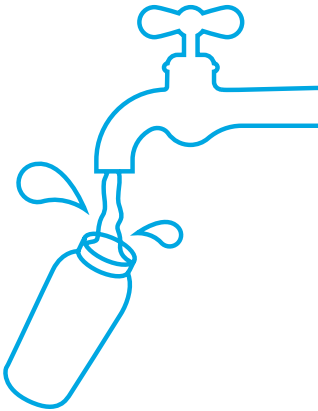




REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BOTTLES

In 2016, 200 plastic bottles were found per mile of UK coastline. Single-use plastic bottles, cans and glass account for 40% of all litter (by volume).

Refillable water bottles come in all shapes and sizes, they can keep water hot as well as cold and can be reused time and time again.



OBJECTIVE:

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

REQUIREMENTS:

The local council responsible for your community passes a resolution* supporting the plastic free journey, committing to taking action itself and supporting plastic-free initiatives within its catchment.

The motion to the council must say these three things:

1. *Council will lead by example and remove single-use plastic items from its premises and operations.*
2. *Council will encourage plastic-free initiatives in the. area, promoting the campaign and supporting events.*
3. *Name a representative of the council to sit on the Plastic Free Community Steering Group.*

WHY?

Councils are in a unique position to lead change.
They act as consumers, using single-use plastics in canteens, meetings and during the daily running of all their premises. They are influencers, many having direct access to the running of local schools, businesses, community organisations and waste management. They work as a political body, often with cross-party members, and by showing unity on an action they can install confidence and determination to succeed.

*When the motion has been voted on and passed at full council, it becomes the resolution.

HOW?

Demonstrating local public support for Plastic Free Communities will encourage council members to take action:

1. Invite local councillors to a beach or community clean. Show the issue of plastic pollution first hand.
2. Write a letter or petition to the council, asking them to support Plastic Free Communities.
3. Show community support and action by local groups, businesses, schools and the public.
4. Attend council meetings and present your aims and progress.
5. Involve the local press to raise awareness.



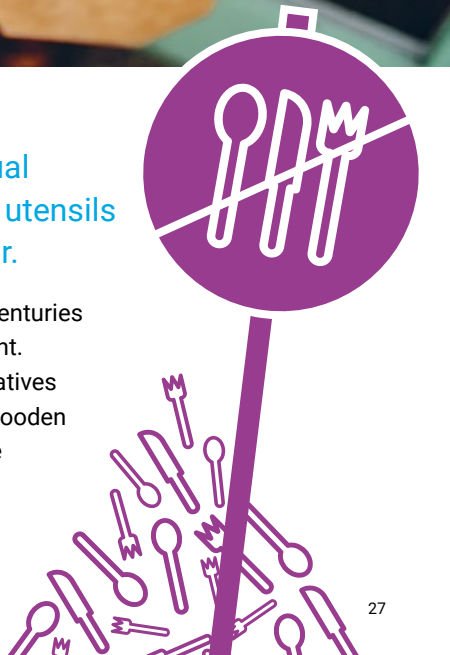
TIPS FOR ENGAGING YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

1. GET YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL INVOLVED IN PLASTIC FREE PROJECTS
2. GET A FRIENDLY COUNCILLOR ON BOARD TO CHAMPION YOUR CAUSE AND PUT IN THE MOTION
3. LOBBY OTHER COUNCILLORS OR ASK TO DO A PRESENTATION AT A MEETING

FREE WHERE YOU LIVE



REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUTLERY



100 billion individual disposable plastic utensils are used every year.

Each utensil could last centuries in the natural environment. Many sustainable alternatives are available including wooden versions, or why not take your own reusable kit.

OBJECTIVE:

PLASTIC FREE STEERING GROUP

REQUIREMENTS:

Local group of stakeholders to meet at least twice per calendar year to discuss the progress of Plastic Free Communities locally; agreeing and setting direction, meeting objectives, and completing the application for Plastic Free Communities Approved status.
The group must contain a local council representative. For populations over 100,000, a flagship business must also be a member.

WHY?

Your Steering Group will amplify your Plastic Free Communities work and ensure it becomes a whole community effort. It will help embed action in the community and get projects, events and initiatives off the ground. An agreed strategy will keep the operation on track and ensure objectives are successfully met.



HOW?

1. **Identify key movers and shakers** who can help make things happen.
2. **Meet regularly** to discuss progress and set targets.
3. **Share the load** – delegate responsibility for projects and objectives.
4. **Keep it informal and fun!** It's a great way to meet people and be positive about your community.
5. **Report back to SAS every quarter**, using the form in your resource pack.





TIPS FOR CREATING YOUR STEERING GROUP

1. PICK KEY LOCAL DECISIONMAKERS AND INFLUENCERS
2. KEEP IT SMALL (MAX. 10 PEOPLE)
3. SET-UP SEPARATE MEETINGS FOR VOLUNTEERS

SINGLE-USE IS NO USE





REFUSE PLASTIC BAGS

1.5 billion Bags for Life are bought in the UK in a year.*

Refuse to buy plastic carriers and 'Bags for Life' and re-use existing bags from home instead. How can you get a Boomerang Bag scheme going where you live?

* Checking out on Plastics 2019, Environmental Investigation Agency and Greenpeace UK

CREATE COMMUNITY ACTION NOW!

Your passion and creativity will help us grow the movement. Share the message among your community, make it fun and see your local area awarded Plastic Free Community Approved status.

#REFUSE Share the impact single-use plastic has and ask your community to refuse things like disposable coffee cups, plastic drinks bottles, carrier bags and other throwaway items.

#REDUCE Discuss the use of single-use plastic in businesses and ask them to make a list of all the items they don't actually need. A quick win for eliminating SUPs – and a money saver too!

#REFILL Encourage local cafes, pubs and public spaces to make sure drinking water is readily available… and remind people in your community to carry a re-useable water bottle

#REUSE Shopping bags, coffee cups, plastic packaging, food containers… the list goes on. Save money and the environment in one action, with reusable versions. Win-win!

#RETHINK How can we do things differently? Encourage people to shop at Plastic Free Business Champions, to take packed lunches out with them and to reduce waste as much as they can.

#RECYCLE Encourage your community to recycle any plastic they come into contact with. These can become new products. Look for closed loop recycling systems. Don't waste plastic!

#PLASTICFREEKIT share lifestyle ideas. Things like bamboo toothbrushes, reusable travel cutlery, deodorant bars, refill cleaning products… help your community rethink the way it does things.

#PLASTICFREELUNCH Encourage local workplaces to ditch the meal deal and promote things like team lunches and packed lunches in re-useable containers.

#PLASTICFREECOMMUNITIES help build the movement. Hold fundraiser events for SAS to support your journey and those of hundreds of other communities across the UK. Just £5 helps create a new community.



APPLYING FOR PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITY STATUS

You have got your community on board, businesses are taking action and your local council and Steering Group are making real commitments to positive change. Brilliant! It's time to apply for Plastic Free Communities Approved status!

When you feel you have completed all five objectives here are your next steps:

1. Complete the reporting forms in your resource pack for the Community Allies, Business Champions and Community Action & Events Objectives.
2. Get a copy of the minutes of the council meeting where the three-part Plastic Free Communities motion was passed.
3. Collate the minutes of two of your Steering Group meetings.
4. Gather photos, press cuttings, Plastic Free Pledges and anything else to support your application.
5. Go to plasticfree.org.uk to upload your application. It will then be assessed and the Plastic Free Communities team will get back to you as soon as possible to let you know if you have been successful.

APPROVED PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITIES WILL RECEIVE:

- Plastic Free Communities Approved Certificate
- A locator on the SAS Plastic Free Communities website
- A national announcement on SAS channels and advice on local press coverage
- The official Plastic Free Communities Approved logo to use on correspondence and comms

HAVE YOU COMPLETED ALL FIVE?

- COMMUNITY ACTION & EVENTS OBJECTIVE
- COMMUNITY ALLIES OBJECTIVE
- BUSINESS CHAMPIONS OBJECTIVE
- LOCAL GOVERNANCE OBJECTIVE
- PLASTIC FREE STEERING GROUP OBJECTIVE

Surfers Against Sewage is one of the UK's leading marine conservation and campaigning charities. Our mission is simple: to Create Ocean Activists everywhere. Our projects and campaigns inspire, unite and empower individuals and communities to take action to protect oceans, beaches, waves and wildlife.

Plastic pollution in our oceans is the 'new sewage'. Blighting our beaches and strangling our seashores it reaches every part of our oceans. It is one of the biggest global environmental threats of our age and fighting it together is our priority issue. To combat plastic pollution we will:

1. STOP THE PROBLEM AT SOURCE
2. CLEAN UP POLLUTION FROM OUR BEACHES

Plastic Free Communities is a movement to engage and connect individuals, communities and businesses in the collective effort to reduce the flow of single-use plastics into the marine environment.

THRIVING OCEAN, THRIVING PEOPLE

This is our vision of the future. This simple phrase captures everything that matters to us, not just in SAS, but humankind. It's a mantra, a motto, a rallying cry to drive us on, with a huge collective goal to help tilt our delicate planet back on its axis. This sounds huge, but when you love what you do, and work as one, that future draws ever nearer.

TOGETHER, WE ARE THE VOICE OF THE OCEAN

SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE

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Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Thanks to sas members for making this project possible.

Esmée Fairbairn FOUNDATION