



# **Business action pack**

## **THE PLASTIC STRAW ACTION PLAN**

Single-use plastic is one of the biggest challenges our world is facing. It's everywhere you look. But it's also causing devastating damage where you can't see it – in our oceans.

This mass pollution problem is one that together we can help to solve. We're asking your business to take a first simple step that can make all the difference:

### **REFUSE PLASTIC STRAWS AND STOP GIVING THEM OUT**

The Marine Conservation Society's Clean Seas programme has led the way in reducing marine pollution over the last decade. We've advocated for change which has led to charges for single-use bags, removal of microbeads in personal care products, changes in labelling on commonly 'mis-flushed' items, and a deposit return system being implemented for Scotland.

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## **MAKE THE SWITCH. MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.**

We've made it really easy to get involved with a handy pack containing everything you need to champion your switch to being plastic free.

### **Staff briefing sheet**

We've included some FAQs so your staff can feel informed about the issue and why you're getting involved.

### **Details of alternative suppliers**

We want to make it easy for you to ditch the plastic straws. But we understand some people may continue to have a need for them – so we've pulled together a list of plastic alternatives.

### **Campaign images**

We've created a suite of images to communicate what your venue has done. There are two campaigns to choose from.



**Campaign 1** dramatises how single-use plastic affects marine life, using people instead of animals. This is inspired by the much watched film of a straw being extracted from a turtle's nose.



**Campaign 2** features an army of plastic straws chasing marine life.

Both campaigns are available as posters, tent cards for tables or bar and social media posts – including an animated gif for Campaign 2.

### **Straw-free logo**

For your venue to display and celebrate being plastic straw free (range of formats).

All of these can be downloaded via <https://www.mcsuk.org/clean-seas/straws>

You can show your support by using the hashtags **#TheLastStrawChallenge** and **#StopStucking** when talking about the issue.

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## STAFF BRIEFING SHEET

Every bit of plastic ever produced still exists today. Scary, right? As for single-use plastics, they're used only once and mostly for a few minutes before being discarded. However, they remain in our oceans for hundreds of years. They often weather down into smaller pieces which are eaten by marine wildlife – and subsequently by us.

All it takes are small changes in our everyday lives to help reduce the UK's plastic footprint and the amount of plastic on our beaches.

Here are three simple actions you can take at work:

**Action 1** > Stop handing out plastic straws freely to customers. Don't place plastic straws at cutlery stations, on the bar, or automatically into drinks.

**Action 2** > Explain why to customers. It's a simple way to ask people to make a small change to help reduce their plastic footprint. Millions of straws are handed out in the UK daily. Do your customers really need them? Make sure your venue uses the campaign material we've provided to get the message out there. You can download a plastic straw free logo to display, and add your logo alongside MCS to show your support. Don't forget to tweet us [@mcsuk](#) too.

You can [find out more here](#).

**Action 3** (optional) > Offer 'Eco straws' on request. Some customers may need a straw for medical or other reasons, so we'd encourage you to stock eco-friendly alternatives to plastic straws on request only – including paper, steel, glass or bamboo. You can find out more on these on the next page.

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## **FACTS TO SUPPORT YOUR STRAW-FREE VENUE**

The Marine Conservation Society's volunteers do beach surveys across the UK throughout the year, with a big annual survey in September. Our 2017 results revealed an increase in the amount of litter found for every 100m stretch of beach in the UK, with plastic straws being in the top 10 items found for the 2nd time in three years.

During this one weekend, over 7,000 members of the British public helped clean their local beaches and collected 5,389 pieces of plastic cutlery – including plastic straws. Millions of straws are given out from UK bars and restaurants, becoming needless waste and adding to the plastic pollution problem.

Are straws not recycled? Straws are considered low quality plastic and are rarely recycled. The UK exports much of its plastic waste (~800,000 tonnes per year) to other countries. Many of these countries are cited as major sources of marine litter as they do not have the infrastructure to deal with waste. We can help by reducing our plastic footprint using the waste hierarchy (refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle). You can support MCS in our call to reduce the issue of single use packaging and ensuring whatever plastic is used, can be easily recycled within the UK.

### **Details of alternatives:**

Making the switch is easy. There are a range of plastic straw alternatives available discounted through our alternative suppliers. You will receive a discount on any wholesale order using the code MCSUK.

These include:

#### **Fancy Straws / Biodegradable paper straws**

<http://www.fancystraws.co.uk>

#### **Bunkoza / Reusable steel straws**

<http://bunkoza.com>

#### **Save Some Green / Reusable bamboo straws**

<https://savesomegreen.co.uk/product/handmade-bamboo-straws/>

#### **Strawesome / Reusable glass straws (also see our bespoke MCS dolphin straws)**

<https://www.strawesome.com/shop/>

For more information on how we can help you to reduce single-use plastic straw consumption, or if you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at the Marine Conservation Society on **01989 566017**.

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## THE DIFFERENCE YOU'VE MADE

You're now a plastic straw free venue. Thanks for making a difference. Once your campaign is up and running, we'd love to truly see the positive impact your establishment has had. Please send your answers to these three simple questions to

[laura.parry@mcsuk.org](mailto:laura.parry@mcsuk.org) or call **01989 566017**.

1. How many plastic straws were you using annually across your venues before you began this campaign?
2. Have you sourced an eco-friendly alternative for when a straw may be requested?
3. How did/will you dispose of your remaining plastic straws?
4. Please tell us the date you have changed your policy.

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