

# *Drastic-on Plastic*

## FESTIVALGOER GUIDE



RAW<sup>o</sup>  
foundation



# ① INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of humanity, people have gathered together to eat and drink, make music and dance, create art and perform rituals, learn and share ideas, trade and become inspired.

There are now over 500 summer music gathering - festivals - in the UK alone and it is estimated that one in six adults in the UK have attended a festival or live music event.

Our personal and collective choices have been altering the planet for thousands of years and now our expanding population and the global spread of consumerism means that our ecological impact has never been more critical.

Mirroring the proliferation of disposables in society, festivals consume vast amounts of single-use plastics and other materials, such as serveware for drinks and food. Nothing better illustrates our global addiction to convenience and a disconnection from the environmental impacts of this throw-away culture. But we can change this, and easily. Each and every one of us can make small changes in our daily lives that adds up to a massive shift in our relationship to plastic stuff. All we have to do is think about what we are buying, make better choices, and replace wasteful single-use with reuse.

Festivals are a place to dream, inspire and make change. Let's start by making the apocalyptic scenes of sea's of litter a thing of the past - make our shared space clean and beautiful, tackle our addiction to plastic and get drastic on making the world a better place.





# ② LET'S GET DRASTIC ON PLASTIC!

Our aim is to raise awareness of the issues caused by using plastics and inspire action to reduce consumption. So, if you are a festival or event organiser interested in a plastic-free future, or keen to reduce your waste volume, this guide is for you!

## WHY

The plastic pollution crisis has caught the attention of the media and raised the concern of the general public. Reports claim that sea salt has been contaminated by microscopic plastic particles,<sup>1</sup> plastic chunks have been found in Arctic ice,<sup>2</sup> and it is predicted that by 2050 the oceans will contain more plastic (by weight) than fish.<sup>3</sup>

As a response to public concerns some companies have started rethinking their use of plastic products by switching to more sustainable alternatives.<sup>4</sup> Sadly, many others are not changing and are sailing full steam ahead into an unsustainable future.<sup>5</sup>

## TOGETHER WE CAN

RAW Foundation is driving forward the uptake of clean, re-usable, local and circular alternative materials in place of harmful plastics. Championing alternative consumption and fostering collaboration within the events industry are powerful tools for driving change.

By working together and implementing the simple, affordable and effective actions outlined in this guide, your event can play an important part in improving human health, protecting precious marine life and the long-term sustainability of our ecosystems.

IT IS PREDICTED  
THAT BY 2050  
THE OCEANS WILL  
CONTAIN MORE  
PLASTIC BY WEIGHT  
THAN FISH

# ③ THE PROBLEM WITH PLASTICS

## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Plastic pollution has reached a crisis point, especially in the ocean. Despite growing awareness of the problem, the flow of plastic waste continues to increase around the world.

The proliferation of single-use plastics encourages a throw-away consumer culture and our inability to deal with it as a waste-product is causing the contamination of our precious water systems, threatening marine life, entering food chains, impacting wildlife and affecting human health.

### QUANTITY

- Vast quantities of long-term plastic debris and particles litter the world's earth and oceans.
- Most of this debris is primary microplastics (such as plastic pellets and microbeads) and secondary microplastics from single-use plastic and packaging, tyres and microfibrils.



“Our actions over the next 10 years will determine the state of the ocean for the next 10,000 years”

Sylvia Earle



### TOXICITY

- Plastic contains hundreds of highly toxic persistent chemicals that are damaging to human health and the environment.
- Plastic is made from and transported by non-renewable fossil fuels (oil).
- Many common plastics (e.g. PET water bottles) can leach toxic chemicals from the plastic into the water they contain, especially in the heat but even in normal conditions.
- Many types of plastic are broken down by sunlight into tiny microplastics that are easily dispersed into water.
- Microplastics act like a sponge, attracting other toxins. These extreme toxic levels can pass up the food chain, contaminating entire ecosystems - including our food.



38.5M PLASTIC  
BOTTLES ARE  
USED EVERY  
DAY IN THE UK

91% OF  
PLASTIC IS  
NOT RECYCLED



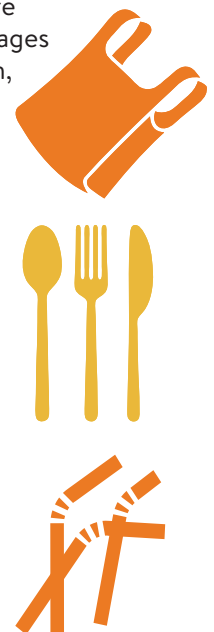
Photo credit: Andy Hughes

## RECYCLABILITY

- Appropriate clean recycling and recovery systems are not keeping pace with the sheer quantity or mixture of plastic produced. An overwhelming 72% of plastic packaging is not recovered at all. 40% is landfilled and 32% leaks out of collection systems, leaching chemicals into surrounding habitats, fresh water and marine water systems.<sup>6</sup>
- Most recycled plastics are exported, often illegally, from Europe to Africa and Asia where burning waste in the open air is commonplace.
- China's ban on imported plastic from Europe in January 2018, has led to a crisis for UK recycling systems and there is a risk of plastic waste being stockpiled or ending up in landfill.<sup>7</sup>
- The majority of recycling processes release toxic emissions or dust into the air and soil.

## DISPOSABILITY

- Sales of products with a short life span packaged in plastic encourages waste on a vast scale. In addition, plastic packaging is almost exclusively single-use.
- Design for disposability has encouraged a throw-away consumer culture, that is disconnected from the environmental consequences.
- Plastics can take a minimum of 500 years to degrade. Ironically, this means that we are using plastic materials that are designed to last, for short-term use.



**BE PART OF THE SOLUTION... NOT THE POLLUTION!**

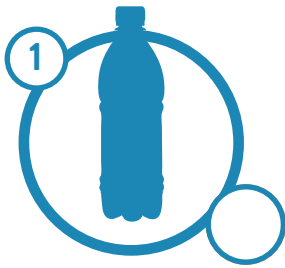
# ④ TAKE ACTION!

## STAND UP FOR YOUR FUTURE!

Easy changes make a big difference!

Tick of your action plan, and use your voice to make a change.

- 1 REFUSE SINGLE USE PLASTIC
- 2 TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT IT
- 3 SHOUT ABOUT IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA



### BRING YOUR BOTTLE

Remember your reusable bottle. Bring your own or buy a 100% stainless steel bottle. Refill at tap points and water kiosks on site.



### CARRY YOUR CUPS

Refuse single-use take away cups, lids and containers. Remember your own reusable cup or buy one on site.



### SKIP THE STRAW

Resist single-use straws and stirrers. Switch to your own reusable stainless steel and bamboo versions.



### GO FOR BIO GLITTER

Avoid plastic glitter. If you have to, use bioglitter instead!



### WIPEOUT THE WETWIPES

Resist single-use plastic wet wipes and plastic-stemmed earbuds. Reuse a cotton facecloth or switch to plastic free wipes, organic cotton wool and card-stemmed earbuds.



### CHERISH YOUR CUTLERY

Refuse single-use plastic cutlery. Take your own reusable cutlery or use compostable\* alternatives if you must.



### BRING YOUR BAGS

Refuse single-use plastic bags. Bring your own reusable bags or baskets.



### AVOID THE APPLICATOR

Refuse plastic feminine care products. Try a reusable menstrual cup or plastic free pads, tampons and liners such as Natracare.



### MINIMISE THE microBEADS

Reduce personal care products containing plastic microbeads and look for microbead free alternatives.





Photo credit: Andy Hughes

## WHAT'S THE BEST TYPE OF REUSABLE BOTTLE?

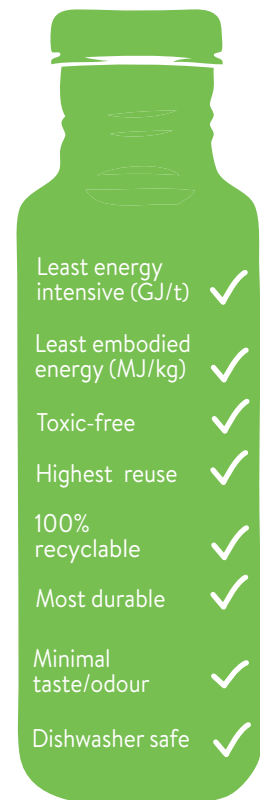
PLASTIC  
(HDPE, LDPE, PP or PC)



ALUMINIUM



STAINLESS STEEL



# 5 USEFUL LINKS

## VIDEOS

The Story of Bottled Water: The Story of Stuff Project

[www.storyofstuff.org/movies-all/story-of-bottled-water/](http://www.storyofstuff.org/movies-all/story-of-bottled-water/)

Charles Moore: Seas of plastic

[www.ted.com/talks/capt\\_charles\\_moore\\_on\\_the\\_seas\\_of\\_plastic](http://www.ted.com/talks/capt_charles_moore_on_the_seas_of_plastic)

Chris Jordan: Pictures some shocking stats

[http://www.ted.com/talks/chris\\_jordan\\_pictures\\_some\\_shocking\\_stats](http://www.ted.com/talks/chris_jordan_pictures_some_shocking_stats)

Chris Jordan: Midway

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLkTTJW4xZs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLkTTJW4xZs)

Ellen MacArthur Foundation: The Circular Economy

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCRKvDyyHml](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCRKvDyyHml)

Janine Benyus: Biomimicry in Action

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_GFq12w5WU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_GFq12w5WU)

Sylvia Earle: Protect our oceans

[www.ted.com/talks/sylvia\\_earle\\_s\\_ted\\_prize\\_wish\\_to\\_protect\\_our\\_oceans](http://www.ted.com/talks/sylvia_earle_s_ted_prize_wish_to_protect_our_oceans)

City to Sea: Plastic Free Periods

<https://www.citytosea.org.uk/our-latest-vid-eo-tops-1-4-million-views-in-a-week/>

City to Sea: Switch the Stick

<https://www.citytosea.org.uk/switch-the-stick-success-film/>

## FILMS

Sir David Attenborough: Blue Planet II

Trashed: An award winning film by Blenheim Films with Jeremy Irons. [www.trashedfilm.com/](http://www.trashedfilm.com/)

A Plastic Ocean: Plastic Oceans founded by Jo Ruxton and Sonjia Norman in 2009.

<http://plasticoceans.uk/>

## BOOKS

Watson, M. (2009), 'Materials Awareness' in A. Stibbe (ed) (2009) The Handbook of Sustainability Literacy: skills for a changing world. Totnes: Green Books.

<http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/stibbe-handbook-of-sustainability/chapters>

## REFERENCES

[1] Karami, A et al (2017), The presence of microplastics in commercial salts from different countries, Scientific Reports, 2017, 7:46173

[2] The Telegraph (2018) Plastic waste now polluting Arctic Ocean, scientists find

[www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/09/25/plastic-waste-now-polluting-arctic-ocean-scientists-find/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/2017/09/25/plastic-waste-now-polluting-arctic-ocean-scientists-find/)

[3] World Economic Forum (2016), The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics

[www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_The\\_New\\_Plastics\\_Economy.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_New_Plastics_Economy.pdf)

[4] Mail Online (2018), The last straw: Wetherspoon to ban single-use plastic

[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4919604/Wetherspoon-ban-single-use-plastic-straws.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4919604/Wetherspoon-ban-single-use-plastic-straws.html)

[5] The Guardian (2017), Coca-Cola increased its production of plastic bottles by a billion last year, says Greenpeace

[www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/02/coca-cola-increased-its-production-of-plastic-bottles-by-a-billion-on-last-year-say-greenpeace](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/02/coca-cola-increased-its-production-of-plastic-bottles-by-a-billion-on-last-year-say-greenpeace)

[6] Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2016), The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics and (2017) The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics & catalysing action

[www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications)

[7] The Guardian (2018), Rubbish already building up at UK recycling plants due to China import ban

[www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jan/02/rubbish-already-building-up-at-uk-recycling-plants-due-to-china-import-ban](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jan/02/rubbish-already-building-up-at-uk-recycling-plants-due-to-china-import-ban)

[8] New Plastics Economy (2018), Oxo Statement

<https://newplasticseconomy.org/publications/oxo-statement>

[9] Chun Z. Yang, C. Z. et al (2011), Most plastic products release estrogenic chemicals: A potential problem that can be solved, Environ Health Perspect., 119 (7): pp 989–996

The Making Waves Plastic-Free Festival Guide for Festivals and Events (2018) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.





# GET IN TOUCH

If you are concerned about plastics and ready to take action, please join us. There is no time to waste.

For further information please contact the RAW Foundation team who will be happy to discuss any opportunities with you.

email: [info@rawfoundation.org](mailto:info@rawfoundation.org)



LIKE US! [/rawfoundation.org](https://www.facebook.com/rawfoundation.org)



[/rawfoundationuk](https://www.instagram.com/rawfoundationuk)



FOLLOW US! [@RawfoundationUK](https://twitter.com/RawfoundationUK) [#plasticpledge](https://twitter.com/hashtag/plasticpledge)

**raw**  
foundation  
[www.rawfoundation.org](http://www.rawfoundation.org)

Realising Another World (RAW) Foundation is a UK Registered Sustainable Development Charity (No. 1138724) and a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee (No. 7310462).