



Title: Plastic Free Canteen

Plastic reduction project:

Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust wanted to reduce and, where possible, eliminate their single use plastic from their canteen located at their headquarters.

Assessment:

We assessed the plastic that we were using within the staff restaurant. We had 15 products that were single use plastic products. We assessed what plastic alternatives or replacements were available to replace them. These plastic products included:

- Sandwich bags
- Salad containers
- Potion pots with lids
- Cutlery
- Plastic lined cups and lids
- Stirrers
- Milk bottles
- Beverage bottles
- Sauce sachets
- Crisp packets

Our challenges were deciding whether to opt for a plastic replacement that had less impact or simply remove that option. In many cases we decided to opt to remove the options for disposable products all together.



From this project we launched a much larger PL'YAS'TIC FREE project which is looking at all single use plastic throughout the organisation. We are working to reduce plastic consumption and look at more circular economy packaging (returnable and reusable) for many of the products that we use.

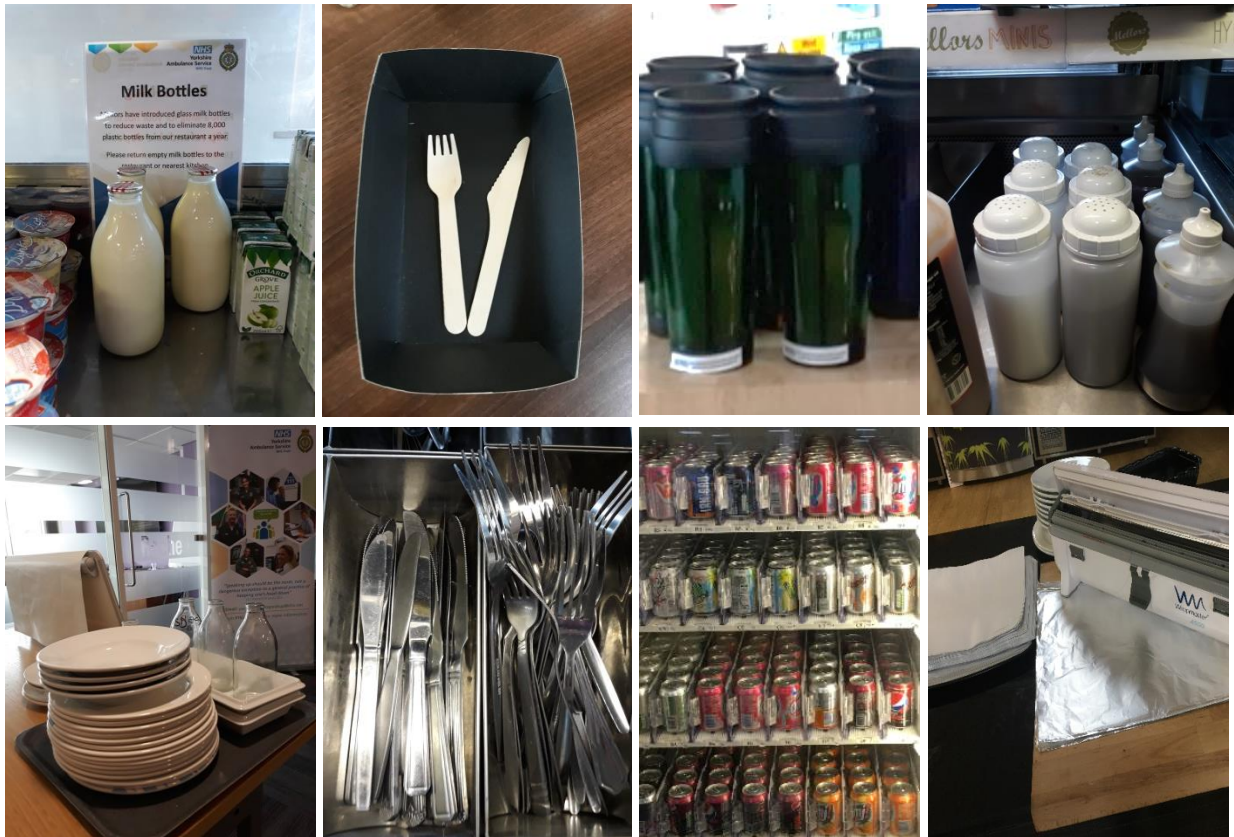
Outcome:

We decided that we would not use plastic replacements as much as possible but look for reusable alternatives. Due to the lack of compostable waste facilities in the area, we decided not to opt for vegware alternatives.

Plastic product	Replaced with/removed
Plastic 1 and 4 pint milk bottles	Glass milk bottles
Plastic lined cups	Rentable cups through a 'rent-a-mug' scheme - £1 returnable reusable cup
Plastic sandwich bags	Paper bags
Plastic salad bowls/take away containers	Ceramic bowls/plate, if leaving the premises, cardboard container
Plastic cutlery	Returnable metal knife/fork or if eating out, wooden knife/fork
Plastic stirrers	Wooden stirrer
Sauce sachets	Large sauce, vinegar, sugar and salt pots
Plastic beverage bottles	Cans, water refill point

For those products that we haven't found a solution (crisp packets) or there have been logistical challenges (e.g. staff being able to see sandwich contents in the vending machine, vending machine cup use), we are continuing to look for alternatives. We are upgrading recycling facilities in order to ensure that we dispose of as much waste in the correct manner.

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Staff Response:

Our kitchen management embraced the change and requested that all supplies and deliveries made to the kitchen had reduced or no plastic alternatives. Working closely with the kitchen staff we eliminated a lot of the waste from the products. Staff are aware of the problems with plastic. Most staff embraced the changes although there were some who were unsure as to what to do initially. We had a full poster and newsletter campaign with a launch event to get staff engaged with why we were doing this with details of the impact that eliminating plastic from our canteen could have.

Stakeholders:

The stakeholders involved in this project were the sustainability team, kitchen staff, suppliers, communication team and staff restaurant users.

Savings:

The amount of plastic and financial savings that we have made has far exceeded what we were expecting:

- We have to date saved nearly 200,000 pieces of plastic from the waste stream.
- We have reduced the amount of plastic waste by approximately 4 tonnes a year, but still generate around 0.5 tonnes of waste from the changes.
- Waste production has been reduced by at least one industrial waste bin per day.
- We have saved over £5000 in a year in procurement costs for plastic packaging. We have tried to minimise the amount of waste that is generated through plastic replacement.
- Our suppliers engaged with the task of plastic and waste reduction
- Cleaning staff do not have to empty the bins as many times over a day.

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