

A background image of teal water with ripples and sunlight reflecting off the surface, creating a shimmering effect. The water transitions from a lighter teal at the top to a darker teal at the bottom.

Our single-use plastic approach

2019 update



Our commitment

We want to help build a better tomorrow. Every day we ask more of ourselves and look for ways to reduce our environmental impact.

Single-use plastics, or disposable plastics, are typically used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These items include plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, carbonated drinks and water bottles, plastic cups and most food packaging.

Poorly managed waste plastics pose a threat to the global environment. Therefore, we ensure that all our sites manage all their wastes effectively. We want to go further though and in 2018 we pledged to eliminate avoidable single-use plastic waste by 2020, in all our offices worldwide where practicable.

Our message is simple: we want to reduce, reuse and recycle – focusing on reducing first and only reusing or recycling when no alternative is possible.

This document is an update to our 2018 commitment. The following sets out what we have done in our operations, investment approach and solutions. We've achieved a lot in one year but some sources of single-use plastics have proven more difficult than others.



Statement

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for this statement. All employees share responsibility for its delivery.

In our offices we have:

- Achieved an audit of our single-use plastics, identified areas for improvement and set reduction targets
- Sourced re-usable salad bowls in our restaurants
- Removed all single-use cups from our offices in the UK, and globally where feasible
- Removed expanded polystyrene from our restaurants
- Put in place water dispensers and glasses in our restaurants
- Removed plastic bottles of water from our meeting rooms and reception areas
- Removed plastic cutlery.



In our offices we have the following work ongoing:

- Working with our IT suppliers to remove expanded polystyrene from equipment deliveries
- Working with our furniture suppliers to use alternatives to expanded polystyrene
- Buying materials made from recycled plastics or that are easily recycled where single-use items are unavoidable
- Working with employees and suppliers to encourage and enable them to take practice steps to reduce the use of single-use plastics and the associated waste
- Encouraging employee and community initiatives to remove plastic waste and litter from the environment, and support this through our volunteer days*
- Our environmental champions have organised a crisp packet recycling network in our UK offices.

* Employees can claim up to three days paid volunteering leave in each calendar year



During this process, we've learned:

- Single-use plastics are everywhere and our refreshment areas have proven particularly challenging, even down to the tea bags
- Compostable packaging alternatives are not a solution in our UK offices where our organic/food waste goes to anaerobic digestion. They also commonly contaminate our mixed dry recycling
- We tried providing recycling points for 'shop bought' disposable cups, but this too was contaminated (often with 'compostable' cups)
- We have more to do and need to focus on further education for our people.

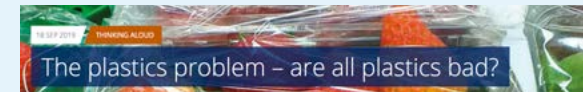
Investing with purpose

Our impact as an investor far outweighs our own operational impact.

Research and analysis:

In 2018 we committed to conducting research and analysis on the risks and opportunities facing investee companies where plastics are a material concern, and we have been engaging with and encouraging such companies to reduce the negative impacts of plastics.

Please click on the image to visit the published on-line paper



Real Estate Investment:

We are working with our property managers and occupiers of our Real Estate investment portfolio to identify ways to reduce single-use plastics, and seek to remove them where possible.

The image shows a close-up of a blue banner with white text. At the top, the Aberdeen Investment logo is visible, featuring a stylized 'A' and the word 'Aberdeen' above 'Investment'. The banner contains the following text:

Everything's Future
Invest today.
Change tomorrow

This exhibition stand is made from recycled ocean-waste plastic to help us operate sustainably for the long-term good of our planet.

Capital at risk.

Unlocking solutions

Most events stands are used once before being thrown away.

Our Events team has been working with Ecoboost to develop a range of exhibition stands that are made purely from repurposed plastic reclaimed from the oceans. This is a visible way in which we can demonstrate our actions.

The first UK ASI stand was set up at the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association Annual Conference. This consisted of 1.33 tonnes of post-consumer plastic waste – the equivalent of 55,415 500ml plastic bottles or 3,166,666 single-use plastic drinking straws.



Next steps

Monitor progress against single-use plastic targets

Education is key so we've continued to focus on our people and what they bring in to our offices

We know we're not going to solve the problem completely, or get it right 100% of the time, but by focusing on the biggest sources of waste we can make a real difference

