



Building London's role as a world leader in tackling ocean plastic pollution

A healthy ocean makes life on Earth possible, protecting us from the worst impacts of the climate crisis. It has provided half the oxygen we breathe, is home to most of the world's biodiversity and is a crucial source of protein for billions worldwide. However, plastic pollution continues to accelerate at an alarming rate, threatening the future of the ocean we depend upon.

Almost eight billion single-use plastic bottles are bought in the UK every year, with Londoners purchasing 175 single-use plastic water bottles on average per person annually¹. In addition to the environmental impact of plastic bottles at the end of their life cycle, most plastic comes from fossil fuels and has associated carbon emissions in production, transport, and as waste. Eradicating single-use plastic water bottles is one of the simplest and most effective things that we can do to support a healthy ocean. Making this change will immediately reduce the enormous chemical and physical pollution that plastic causes, choking our land and ocean, killing wildlife, threatening human health and exacerbating climate breakdown.

In recent years, London has made progress in tackling ocean plastic pollution and promoting a culture of reusing and refilling for example by installing a network of free water refill points² across the capital, but there is still much more work to be done. We must continue to build momentum, making unnecessary single-use plastic water bottles a thing of the past and helping to enable a sustainable future for our city and ocean.

This year will see the UK host the UNFCCC COP26 and the G7 summit; there has never been a more opportune moment for our capital to lead the way in ocean protection and climate action on the international stage. Ocean plastic pollution is a solvable problem and solving it will benefit us all. It is a crucial year for action and for demonstrating that action is possible.

In order to tackle single-use plastic water bottle use in the capital, and protect London's cherished blue and green spaces and our connected ocean from harmful pollution, we are asking the future Mayor of London to commit to the following actions:

1. Promote London as a city leading the charge to eliminate unnecessary single-use plastic

Over the past five years, more than 3,000 refill points have been made available across London³.

- Celebrate and champion London as the leader of national efforts to reduce single-use plastic pollution at source using platforms such as the UNFCCC COP26 to showcase London and galvanise action amongst other global cities.

One in three Londoners are more likely to stop buying single-use plastic water bottles after viewing an advert about ocean plastic⁴.

- Mobilise communications across TfL and the London tourism industry to educate people about the impact of single-use plastics on our ocean.
- Inform and reassure the public on tap water hygiene and provide guidance on where to access refill points across the city.

London is a stepping stone to bigger and bolder commitments.

- Harness London's position of influence and raise the issue to national government level. Inspire politicians through London's success, working with government to formulate policy and legislation around single-use plastic water bottles across the country.

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/waste-and-recycling/single-use-plastic-bottles>

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/5m-fund-for-hundreds-of-public-water-fountains-8>

³ <https://www.onelessbottle.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/05/Oneless-Poster-Refill-London.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.onelessbottle.org/portfolio/hello-london-highlights/>



- Connect with Mayors across the UK and tell the story of London's transition from single-use plastic bottles, building relationships to support other geographies to go single-use plastic water bottle free.

2. Ensure sufficient and equal access to public refill points in London

Park use in London increased by 160% during the coronavirus pandemic⁵.

- Respond to the growing demand for London's green and blue spaces by increasing the provision of refill points in these locations. Protect London's National Park City status and mitigate the threat of increased plastic pollution created by more users.

The coronavirus pandemic exposed significant social and economic inequalities in London.

- Transcend inequalities preventing Londoners from refilling on-the-go and expand the provision of free and safe water refill points to all communities and all London Boroughs equally. Enable Londoners to save money and stop buying bottled water.

3. Eradicate single-use plastic water bottles in GLA buildings and support London businesses to do the same

City Hall has made great progress in reducing single-use plastics on site.

- Use this achievement as a springboard to eliminate single-use plastic water bottles within all buildings owned or managed by the GLA across the capital by 2022.

66% of businesses in London want to reduce their single-use plastics⁶.

- Support is needed to enable London's businesses to make this transition - barriers around the cost and suitability of alternatives are just some examples reported by London's businesses that present challenges.

Refill points must be embedded in our city's future.

- Work with Local Authorities to ensure all new builds and redevelopments in London incorporate refill points into their design. Act now to embed this infrastructure within the London Plan and build a city where single-use plastic water bottles are a thing of the past.

Who we are:

The #OneLess campaign has been leading the charge against ocean plastic pollution since 2016, cultivating a fundamental change in the way Londoners drink water – from single-use plastic water bottles, to reusing and refilling. Our vision is to transform London into a place where single-use bottled water is a thing of the past and where plastic waste is drastically reduced for the sake of the ocean.

#OneLess is led by the Zoological Society of London, in partnership with Forum for the Future, The International Programme on the State of the Ocean, and the Thames Estuary Partnership. We take a systemic approach to change and work with major London attractions, venues and businesses to find and implement solutions to eradicate plastic bottled water and enable a refill culture across our city.

For more information visit www.onelessbottle.org



⁵https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/lfdc_-_sdgs_and_londons_green_fair_recovery_1.pdf

⁶https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/sites/default/files/resources/KBT_Role_of_Businesses_in_Reducing_Single-Use_Plastic_Report_2020.pdf

#OneLess

This statement is supported by the following organisations:



