



#OneLess Practical Guide Executive Summary



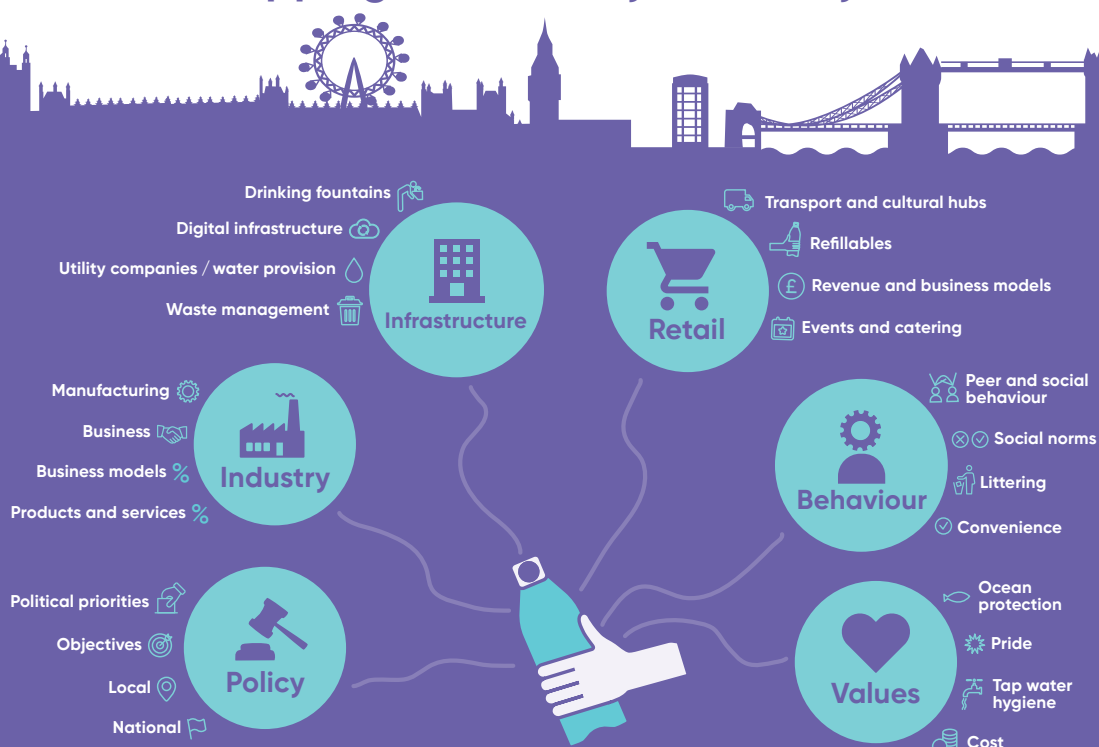
The problem

Since 2016, **#OneLess** has applied an experimental, systems change approach to reducing ocean plastic pollution at source, using London as a model. Plastic pollution is one of the most significant and growing threats to ocean health¹, with at least eight million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean annually from land². Single-use plastic bottles are a major contributor and Londoners are among the highest consumers of bottled water in the UK, estimated to be using over one billion annually citywide³.

Our approach

We took a uniquely collaborative approach to this issue, working with a rapidly growing movement of changemakers to find and implement solutions to transform the system of hydration in London. This involved **identifying the barriers** to reducing plastic pollution and strategically choosing actions that could turn the tide on single-use plastic water bottles. Importantly, our approach has been informed by science, with a commitment to **ongoing monitoring and evaluation** across all our activities. **#OneLess** is deeply rooted in the belief that to create transformational change for the sake of the ocean, we must foster a connection to and appreciation of its value - beyond short-term economic gain.

Mapping London's hydration system



Our recommendations

Using #OneLess as a case study, this guide makes the following recommendations for catalysing systemic change around a chosen conservation issue:

- 1.** Set up a team based on a shared intention and desire to affect change, and then establish the project's scope, and the boundaries of the system you are trying to change.
- 2.** Identify stakeholders across the system, highlighting the 'key players' who are both interested in engaging and highly influential in the system.
- 3.** Diagnose the system by looking at behaviours, enablers, barriers, actors, innovations and external pressures – and engage stakeholders to understand how they perceive the system.
- 4.** Map the system by visualising its different levels and complex dynamics, then sense-check these findings with engaged stakeholders.
- 5.** Identify key 'leverage points' (opportunities for action) and decide on the best areas to intervene.
- 6.** Engage and energise people around the project and then experiment with different interventions – trigger new approaches and solutions that test different leverage points.
- 7.** Communicate strategically about activities to build a connection between human and ocean values.
- 8.** Sustain impact over time – after you've intervened, you should re-diagnose the system to see what has changed. Undertaking a system re-diagnosis will allow you to adapt, monitor and evaluate interventions and share findings with others.
- 9.** Recognise that the team does not need to continue forever in the same form – identify when you have reached a 'tipping point' in changing the system, and who the other actors are that can sustain that impact over time.



Our achievements

Our approach has enabled us to form effective and trusted collaborations with project partners, drawing on the expertise of different organisations and forming a network of supporters that are all working towards the same goal.

London is transforming into a city where refilling is the norm

#OneLess



#OneLess impact 2016–2021

Supporting policy change



#OneLess network of drinking fountains dispenses **775,580 bottles** in two years, catalysing a **£5 million** investment from the Mayor and Thames Water to install 100+ fountains.



The 2018 **London Environment Strategy** sets bottle reduction targets.

> 40 organisations and businesses



call on 2021 Mayor of London candidates for urgent action on single-use plastic water bottles.

Brokering collaboration



#OneLess Pioneer Network of **85+ organisations** remove **five million single-use plastic water bottles** and **nine million single-use plastic items** from supply chains.



Together with Greater London Authority and MIW Water Cooler Experts, **pioneering a drinking fountain fund** to help support Londoners to refill on the go.



Mentoring and learning events support organisations to reduce single-use plastics.



Collaboration with **17 designers and innovators** for 2018 London Design Festival creates product-service solutions to eliminate single-use plastic water bottles.



Teaming up with CSOs to achieve greater impact, e.g. Surfers Against Sewage for the successful 'Plastic Free Parliament' campaign, resulting in **Parliament going single-use plastic free**.

Engaging Londoners and visitors



84% of Londoners report owning a refillable, 60% refill at least once a month.



'Hello London, Goodbye Ocean Plastic' reaches **five million people**. **One in three Londoners** surveyed report being more likely to stop buying single-use plastic water bottles after seeing this campaign.



125,000+ plastic bottles removed from Thames by hundreds of Thames 21 and North Thames Estuary Litter Picking Group volunteers. **357 volunteers** trained to monitor plastic bottle pollution.



Our broader impact

United Nations HQ goes single-use plastic water bottle free, changing the prescribed behaviour of delegates at all UN meetings.

#OneLess provides a **blueprint for other geographies**, where #OneLess is being implemented, e.g. in Chagos Archipelago



Starting your own #OneLess project

Our guide is aimed at organisations, campaigns and cities around the world that are interested in #OneLess as a systems change approach to environmental conservation. Systems change means tackling the root causes of social issues, problems that are often ingrained into the structures and processes that underpin business, government or society. **Download the full guide** to read personal reflections from the #OneLess team to support others in kick-starting their own values-based, systems change journey. Be taken on a step-by-step journey through robust methodologies, supported by systems change tools and prompted with ‘questions to consider’ along the way.

Download the full guide

References

1. WWF. 2020. Living Planet Report 2020 - Bending the curve of biodiversity loss. Almond, R.E.A., Grooten M. and Petersen, T. (Eds). WWF, Gland, Switzerland. Available from <https://www.zsl.org/sites/default/files/LPR%202020%20Full%20report.pdf>
2. Jambeck et al., 2015. Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean. Science 347, 768-771. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1260352>
3. BRITA. 2016. Survey of water bottle usage by UK Adults, with research by OnePoll. In collaboration with the Marine Conservation Society.

“Start by finding out more information on alternatives to single-use plastic and talk to other venues that are making similar changes. Then just do it! The reusable cup system has been positively received by the public on social media, who see the change and appreciate it.”

LORDS CRICKET GROUND, #ONELESS PIONEER
NETWORK MEMBER

“We have to generate in everyone a sense of environmental irresponsibility when using single-use plastic. We hedged around for too long on the issue of the one litre single-use plastic bottle and now, having made the change, we have to ask ourselves: what was all the fuss about? Just do it!”

EDEN CATERERS, #ONELESS PIONEER
NETWORK MEMBER

“As a major business district in one of the biggest cities in the world, we wanted to show that it’s possible to break the pollution pathway with a programme that rewards the right behaviours. We knew that if we could be successful, we could inspire other districts, communities and individuals to make a difference.”

CANARY WHARF GROUP, #ONELESS PIONEER
NETWORK MEMBER