



Considerate Constructors Scheme

Plastics and packaging

This best practice document has been prepared by the Scheme's Plastics and Packaging Task Group following the successful 'Spotlight on... plastics and packaging' campaign and the follow up e-learning course. It is intended as a guide to 'quick wins' in order to assist companies and construction sites in reducing their use of plastic and minimising plastic waste.

High packaging materials/suppliers

The following have been identified by many contractors as the main source of packaging waste on construction sites (in no particular order):

- PPE suppliers.
- Mechanical and electrical equipment.
- Bathroom pods and other bathroom equipment.
- Kitchen and white goods suppliers.
- Fit-out and flat-pack materials.
- Bricks, blocks and insulation.
- Protective films on a variety of materials including glazing, laminates and cladding.
- Fixtures and fittings (in a variety of plastic bags, boxes and containers).
- Catering suppliers that supply packaged food and drinks.



Some examples of how companies/sites can reduce their use of plastic in their businesses are set out below. Even if companies/sites were to introduce just one of these measures, there would be a significant change in the industry's reliance on single-use plastics. Imagine the reduction in the use of plastics if everyone introduced all of them.

Best practice through procurement

- Write tenders/specifications to require the appointed supplier to avoid single use plastics wherever practicable with preference for reusable items.
- Set up initial meetings with suppliers to review reductions in plastic packaging (PPE, for example, can be delivered in cardboard packaging; furniture can be protected in cardboard or blankets/fabrics and returned to the supplier for reuse).
- Set targets for suppliers to monitor packaging and to reduce it year on year.
- If practicable, schedule orders in bulk on a regular basis rather than ordering small quantities on a periodic basis.
- Choose suppliers who will readily reduce their consumption of plastic packaging, possibly by providing their own waste containers for storing plastics prior to them collecting it.
- Where possible, encourage suppliers to move away from single-use packaging and instead use packaging made from recycled plastic materials.

Best practice in offices

- Establish a task group to look at plastic use and feasibility of switching to alternatives to single-use plastics.
- Develop a Waste Management Plan.
- Implement a 'ban' on all single use plastics.
- Engage with suppliers to reduce their packaging and take back their packaging waste.
- Use glass where possible instead of plastic cups.
- Buy cleaning products in large containers and dilute for use when needed.
- Provide in-house guidance for staff on the reduction of plastic use.
- Use biodegradable plastics and dispose as composting/garden waste.
- Provide recycling stations to encourage recycling.
- Ensure waste bins are only emptied when they are full and need to be emptied rather than routinely emptying bins.
- Ensure printer cartridges are returned to the supplier, preferably for recycling after use.

Best practice on site

- Implement a 'ban' on single use plastic cups, stirrers, crockery and cutlery.
- If practicable, provide mains water onsite; this is always potable and safe to drink. Use water coolers from mains rather than bottled versions.
- Issue company/project branded water bottles to operatives – these could also be used to promote the industry in line with the Scheme's #loveconstruction campaign.
- Make use of reusable standardised signage.
- Provide recycling stations to encourage recycling. Segregate plastics and packaging on site for separate disposal.
- Identify plastics on site, their source and their route for disposal.
- Identify where plastics get sent for disposal.
- Monitor waste levels and communicate these to personnel and the public.



Here are some useful links where you can find more information on how to reduce your plastic and packaging waste:

- [Entries on the Best Practice Hub](#)
- [Spotlight on... plastics and packaging](#)
- [Plastics and packaging e-learning](#)

Plastic take-back schemes

- [Eurocell](#) - PVCu recycling.
- [Recycling PVC Ltd.](#) - PVCu recycling.
- [Veka Recycling](#) - PVCu recycling.
- [Floorprotec sustainable recycled products.](#) - Plastic floor protection.
- [Proplex Closed Loop Recycling Scheme](#) - Plastic floor protection.
- [Recovinyl](#) - Vinyl Flooring.
- [Recofloor](#) - Vinyl Flooring.
- [National Hard Hat Recycling Scheme](#) - Hard hat recycling.
- [Newton Waterproofing](#) - HDPE waterproofing membrane.
- [Terracycle](#) - All plastic products.