



CASE STUDY: Berkeley Homes (South East London) Ltd – *Our Commitment to Zero Waste*

Established in 1976, the Berkeley Group is a leader in the business of urban regeneration and placemaking, working with partners to tackle the shortage of good quality homes and to make a lasting contribution to the landscape and communities we construct.

The Berkeley Group is made up of six autonomous companies, one of which is Berkeley Homes. In line with the Group's 'Our Vision' commitment, Berkeley Homes (South East London) Ltd has developed a zero waste strategy with the aim of protecting and preserving the environment.

Berkeley Homes (South East London) Ltd is focusing particularly on the issue of plastic pollution and has established a minimum requirements guide for reducing plastic waste in their site canteens. The guide includes the following principles:

- **No polystyrene cups, food boxes and plates are to be used** – Polystyrene is a key plastic pollutant, as once disposed, the polystyrene breaks down into microplastics, contaminating the environment.
- **No traditional paper cups with a plastic (PP/PE) lining should be used** – These traditional cups are not biodegradable and are difficult to recycle because of the plastic lining attached to the paper.
- **No plastic cutlery, plastic straws and plastic bags are to be used.**
- **Paper cups, food boxes and plates with a starch (PLA) lining should be used** – These cups are fully biodegradable and can be composted with food waste. They also use less energy and water to produce in comparison to plastic.
- **Reusable cups should be used** – Workers should be encouraged to bring in reusable cups to eliminate the consumption of single-use, plastic cups.

For site meetings, conferences and events, the following must be used:

- **Water jugs must be used to provide water** – No plastic bottles are to be distributed.
- **Ceramic mugs must be used for hot drinks** – No disposable cups are to be distributed.
- **Metal spoons must be used rather than plastic spoons.**

South Quay Plaza, a Berkeley Homes (South East London) Ltd project have also set up a stash of reusable plastic bags by the door of our offices to encourage workers to take a bag when they go to the shops for lunch, rather than purchasing another plastic bag. The site is

also equipped with drinking fountains throughout to reduce the need for single-use, disposable plastic cups.

Initiatives

The team at South Quay Plaza worked with one of the subcontractors to develop and implement reusable, collapsible boxes for small deliveries. On site, the content is unpacked, the boxes are folded down and the supplier then collects and reuses the boxes for the next delivery. Unlike cardboard boxes, the boxes are waterproof and eliminate the need for additional plastic wrapping on materials and items being delivered. They are looking to make this initiative commonplace in the future to eliminate unnecessary, single-use plastic packaging waste.

In addition, they have established a hard hat recycling scheme in collaboration with [Yes Recycling](#). This is the only dedicated recycling scheme for hard hats in the UK. The scheme enables hard hats to be recycled locally, rather than being sent overseas or disposed of to landfill. The scheme also lends itself to a circular economy model by upcycling the plastic into high grade pellets to be used again in construction.

To find out more about Berkeley Group, please click [here](#) to visit their website.