

Plastic Smart Charlbury

Kids' Guide

What is Plastic Smart Charlbury?

Plastic Smart Charlbury is a campaign to get everyone in Charlbury cutting plastic waste. We want to show the world that we can use less and recycle more. We are not trying to get rid of all plastic, but we want to be a lot smarter about when we need it and what happens to it afterwards.

How can you join in?

Your family can be part of Plastic Smart Charlbury by choosing four different things to do to be plastic smart this year. There are some ideas to help you in this guide.

You should choose something for each of the four **Plastic Smart goals**:

1. Reduce plastic use
2. Buy things that are made from recycled materials and are easy to recycle
3. Recycle carefully
4. Keep plastics out of the environment

When you have chosen, fill out your [Action Plan](#) and email it to plasticsmart@sustainablecharlbury.org.uk or send it to Sustainable Charlbury, c/o The Curiosities Company Ltd, 39 Sheep Street, Charlbury, OX7 3RR

You can also help by getting your school, clubs, library, local shops or your friends to join in too.

Why are we worried about plastic?

Plastics are brilliant materials and are used in many different things, from cups to computers. But HUGE amounts of plastic are made every year and a lot of it is getting into our countryside, washing away in the rivers and ending up in the oceans. Plastics don't disappear. Some break into tiny pieces which can be eaten by fish and get into the food chain. Bigger pieces can get tangled around animals or wedged in their stomachs.

To protect wildlife, we need to cut down the amount of plastic that is made and make sure that NONE of it ends up in the environment. When we do this, we need to be careful not to cause other problems by mistake. For example, using lots of paper and cardboard instead of plastic can be worse for climate change – which is even more dangerous for wildlife than plastic pollution.

Ideas for Goal 1: Reduce plastic use

The best thing we can do is to buy less stuff. Everything we buy has had to be made using materials and energy, often in a factory on the other side of the world. After we have finished with it, it becomes rubbish and has to be burned or buried.

- If you are doing crafts, choose natural materials like leaves, seeds and cotton fabric scraps instead of plastic ones like glitter, stickers and straws.
- Take your own water bottle when you go out, so you don't need to buy bottled drinks.
- Use a little at a time: can you make your toothpaste and shampoo last for AGES?
- Re-fill bottles of washing up liquid and other cleaning products rather than buying new ones – you can do this at the Charlbury Makers' Market (5-8pm on the fourth Thursday of every month in the Memorial Hall).
- Buy clothes and toys second-hand; you can also get second-hand things for free from the Charlbury "Bring & Takes" in March and October.
- Ask your favourite shops and companies to stop using too much packaging – have they signed up to the [UK Plastics Pact](#)?

Look out for...

- Food waste: some plastic wrapping can help vegetables and other food to last longer and stop it being wasted (food waste is REALLY bad for climate change).
- Replacing plastic packaging with paper or cardboard can sometimes be worse for climate change too – especially if the paper or card is not made from recycled materials.

Ideas for Goal 2: Buy things that are made from recycled materials and are easy to recycle

We want companies to make their products easy to recycle. We can help this to happen by only buying from them when they do! Look out for products which have a recycling symbol on them, it might look like one of these:



or, even better:



which means it is made from recycled plastic too

One problem is that sometimes plastics are stuck to other materials, which makes it much harder to recycle them properly. For instance, coffee cups are made from paper with a layer of plastic on the inside. If you can, it's better to choose things that are made from a single (recyclable) material or are easy to separate (for example, some yoghurt pots have been made so that you can peel off the cardboard from the plastic pot inside).

- Next time you (or your family) buys something in a plastic bottle or tub, make sure it has a recycling symbol on it. See if there is one product that you can regularly change for a different one with better packaging.
- Try not to buy things made from plastic mixed with other materials, unless it can be separated.
- Don't buy anything in a black plastic tray – black plastic can't be recycled at the moment.
- Say "no, thank you" to foam or polystyrene containers.

Ideas for Goal 3: Recycle carefully

At the moment, there are so many different types of plastics used, that it can be confusing to know which ones can be recycled. If we don't realise that something can be recycled, then it will be wasted. But if we try to recycle something that can't be recycled, that's not good either! It will get mixed in with all the proper recycling and ruin it.

Things to do:

- Pass on as much as possible via friends, charity shops, charlbury.info, Charlbury [DIY Spares](#), [Freegle](#) or at the Charlbury Bring & Take.
- DO put in your blue-lidded recycling bin: **cartons, Tetrapaks, plastic tubs, food trays, bottles and tops**. Rinse them out if they are really mucky, but don't waste hot water by washing thoroughly.
- Put out electrical items in a black recycling box.
- Put old clothes/shoes in a carrier bag next to the recycling bin – keep them dry.
- If you use an asthma inhaler, take it to the Co-op pharmacy in Charlbury for recycling.

Things NOT to do:

- DON'T put in your blue-lidded recycling bin: polystyrene, plastic bags, bubble wrap, cling film, black plastic trays, plant pots, or compostable plastics. If you are not sure, it is better to leave it out.

Ideas for Goal 4: Keep plastics out of the environment

The best thing is to stop plastics from getting into the environment in the first place. If it's already there, then we need to clean it up.

Stopping plastic getting out:

- Don't use glitter, sequins, googly eyes or other tiny plastic things that can get everywhere.
- Never drop litter – and ask other people not to too.
- Don't try to put rubbish into bins that are already full – it will only blow away.
- Never put anything in the toilet except pee, poo and toilet paper. Did you know that wet wipes are actually made of plastic? Lots of people don't realise and flush them away – but then they end up in the rivers and the ocean.
- Don't wash your clothes until they really need it – especially fleeces. Little fibres can wash into the drains.
- Drive less. Plastic wears off the tyres as we drive around.

Cleaning up plastic that is already there:

- Take a bag with you so that you can pick up litter when you see it.
- Go on a litter pick with your friends!

My Plastic Smart Action Plan

About me/us

Name(s):

Address:

Contact email (must be for a grown up):

My/our actions

I/we would like to be part of Plastic Smart Charlbury for the next 12 months and commit to the following actions:

Goal 1. Reduce plastic use

Actions:

-

Goal 2. Buy things that are made from recycled materials and are easy to recycle

Actions:

-

Goal 3. Recycle carefully

Actions:

-

Goal 4. Keep plastics out of the environment

Actions:

-

I/we would like to join the Sustainable Charlbury email list Yes [] No []

Signature:

Name:

Date: