## The Plastic Waste Problem

In the past 100 years the world has produced a lot of plastic; much of this still exists somewhere today. Half of all plastic produced is for single-use purposes, including bottles, food packaging, coffee cups, straws, bags and plastic cutlery. These items, designed to be used for minutes, will still be on our planet in hundreds of years.



Up to **12 million tonnes of plastic** ends up in the sea each year and the impact of this was shockingly highlighted in the recent Blue Planet series. This plastic causes harm to ocean animals and can end up in seafood that is on our plates.

The Plastic Free Letchworth project helped people, businesses, schools and community groups reduce their plastic use. They achieved the SAS approved plastic free community accreditation from Surfers Against Sewage.

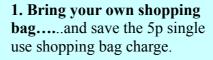


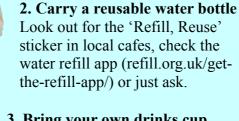


Surfers against Sewage (SAS)
SAS was set up to clean up our
coastlines. Now they are
encouraging inland communities
to do the same using their Plastic
Free Coastlines Communities
Toolkit. (sas.org.uk)

## Seven Tips for Using Less Plastic



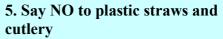






**3. Bring your own drinks cup** ....cafes are beginning to offer discounts for people bringing reusable cups, so you may save money!





If you need a straw consider taking your own reusable stainless steel or bamboo straw. Take a set of metal, wooden or bamboo cutlery with you to use when out and about.



**6. Avoid plastic produce bags when shopping** Visit smaller local shops who don't use plastic bags and wrappings. In supermarkets try to avoid items covered in non-recyclable plastics (e.g. crisp bags, biscuit wrappings). Take your own paper or mesh bags with you for fruit and vegetables.

## 7. Avoid plastic in the kitchen.

Cover food with a small plate or beeswax wrap, or store it in a reusable container to avoid clingfilm and plastic bags.