

# Tackling Plastic NI



## Case Study – Compostable Packaging, Slow Food Festival, Derry 2019



Project name/title	Compostable Trial, Slow Food Festival, Derry
Project contact	Anne Carlin, Derry City and Strabane District Council
Project Summary	<p>Derry City and Strabane District Council trialled compostable packaging for street food traders at their annual Slow Food Festival on 29<sup>th</sup> &amp; 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.</p> <p>The event, funded by DAERA's Northern Ireland Regional Food Programme, has a strong focus on sustainability as well as showcasing the best of local, clean, fair food.</p> <p>The compostable trial involved DAERA granting approximately £2,000 to the Council, via the Tackling Plastic NI project, to purchase a range of dinnerware including compostable plates, cups, cutlery, containers, straws and stirrers. The dinnerware items were vegware i.e. of plant origin, made from either Bagasse (a sugarcane byproduct) or a corn-based starch plastic known as PLA. Napkins, bags and boxes were made from Kraft paper, and stirrers were made from wood. The products were all sourced from Zeus Packaging and were competitively tendered.</p> <p>The Council also trialled a vessel deposit return scheme at the Event Bar, which was match-funded by the Council. This involved purchasing sturdy plant-based EcoCups, each costing £1, and passing that price on through an additional £1 deposit on top of the price of the first beverage.</p> <p>This was then refunded if customers returned the vessel when leaving. These cups were washed and reused at the subsequent Sippy Fest Event.</p> <p>Additionally, ahead of the event, the Council adopted a competitive tender process for traders with a sustainability weighting of 10% in tender application assessments.</p>
Aims/objectives of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To trial a selection of vegware packaging in a closed-loop controlled environment</li> <li>- To test the appetite for compostable packaging with local traders.</li> <li>- To trial a deposit return scheme with patrons at a public event</li> </ul>

Funded by	DAERA
Cost – if any	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compostable items (including paper straws, PLA containers, double wall cups, lids, bagasse dinner plates, CPLA cutlery, Kraft napkins, Kraft burger boxes / hot dog boxes, wooden stirrers, paper bags)</li> </ul> <p>The Council match funded the cost of the reusable EcoCups, signage and promotional materials.</p> <p>For more information on the quantities and costs, please contact Anne Carlin.</p>
Cost savings through supply of alternative products/landfill savings	<p>It is hard to quantify cost savings as the Council had difficulty getting the public to segregate waste at stations. Despite significant effort by council staff and food traders to encourage the public to dispose of the compostable dinnerware in the correct bin, the recycling and general rubbish bins were still cross-contaminated. Although there were minimal financial savings through avoided landfill waste, there was still an environmental benefit by not using plastic consumables.</p> <p>The deposit return scheme is perhaps the more financially sustainable option with the cost of the cups (£1 per unit) being covered by the cost of the deposit (£1) if not returned and net saving to the council from the ability to reuse the vessels at future events, as well as the avoided environmental damage from production and waste.</p>
Increases in recycling or reduction targets if any	No marked increase in recycling as event bins were unfortunately contaminated.
Target audience	Traders and patrons attending the Slow Food Festival event.
Successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compostable packaging well received by traders</li> <li>- Successful testbed for future events</li> <li>- Public particularly enthused by deposit return scheme</li> <li>- Learning the importance of staffing bins and good signage to avoid contamination at future events</li> <li>- Positive PR for event being sustainable</li> </ul>

<p>Failures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult to police disposal of waste on site. Extra staffing required to guide public and monitor. Signs on bins is simply not enough.</li> </ul> 
<p>Legacy (i.e. impact of the project, next steps)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council is now encouraging all food traders to purchase compostable dinnerware by embedding sustainability clauses within event tender documents and procurement practice, such as the sustainability weighting in the tender</li> <li>- Council is looking at ways of including the additional cost of vegware products into the stall rental fee, which would mean the traders have no option but to use sustainable packaging</li> <li>- Council is planning to implement a cup deposit return scheme at Foyle Maritime Festival which runs in Derry from 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020 for a week.</li> </ul>
<p>Any communications inhouse or external (eg press releases, photos, social media, links to your organisations website)</p>	<p>Press cuttings and photos attached</p>

