

UNITED KINGDOM



POPULATION
67.6
million

(2022 estimates)

REFILL Campaign

Plastic pollution, particularly from single-use plastics like water bottles and packaging, has become a significant environmental concern worldwide. These plastics are designed for convenience, yet their impact is long-lasting, as they often end up in landfills, oceans, and natural ecosystems, where they take centuries to degrade. Single-use plastic items are among the most commonly discarded items, contributing to a growing crisis of pollution. This not only harms wildlife but also disrupts ecosystems and poses risks to human health through microplastic contamination. Tackling this issue requires urgent action to reduce reliance on these products and improve waste management systems.

In 2015, the environmental organization City to Sea launched a campaign aimed at tackling plastic pollution at its source by promoting sustainable alternatives. The initiative introduced an app designed to help people find places where they can eat, drink, and shop with minimal to no packaging. Initially piloted in Bristol, the campaign started by offering access to free drinking water through fountains, shops, and cafés. The initiative quickly expanded, engaging communities across the UK and beyond. Today, the Refill app is available in over 20 countries, helping diverse communities reduce their reliance on single-use plastics by promoting refill and reuse practices.

The Refill app offers a simple way for individuals and businesses to contribute to reducing plastic waste by encouraging reuse and refilling. Anyone can download the free app to access a global network of over 330,000 Refill Stations where they can refill water bottles, grab coffee in their reusable cups, or even shop with less plastic. For individuals, the app highlights locations offering free water refills, discounts for bringing reusable coffee cups, and places where you can bring your own lunchbox for takeaway meals. It also supports plastic-free shopping by helping users find stores that offer refill options. Businesses and communities can participate by adding their locations as Refill Stations, promoting eco-friendly practices and contributing to the growing global network. The app also explores returnable packaging options, making it easier to borrow, return, and reuse items, ultimately helping to reduce single-use plastics.



Source: refill.org.uk



IMPACTS

- 570,000+ downloads of the Refill app.
- 330,000+ locations mapped globally, where people can access free drinking water and find other places to eat, drink and shop with less waste.
- 439 towns, cities or villages around the UK are signed up as a Refill scheme.
- 14,000 average monthly users.
- 73% of surveyed people have refilled their water bottle after spotting a Refill sticker in a café or shop window.
- 86% reported that being aware of the Refill campaign has made them more likely to carry a reusable bottle and refill while on the go.
- Since launching, the Refill campaign has saved around 60 million plastic bottles, assuming that all UK Refill Stations have been used once a day. This is the equivalent of 762 tonnes of plastic prevented and 3,431 tonnes of CO₂-eq saved (sequestered carbon from 155,967 trees in a year)

Global Network of places to refill



Source: refill.org.uk

WORLD REFILL DAY



World Refill Day, celebrated on June 16th, is a global public awareness campaign aimed at educating people about plastic pollution and promoting sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics. Launched globally in 2021, the campaign seeks to accelerate the shift from single-use plastics to reusable systems. Since its inception, millions have been engaged worldwide, positioning reuse as a key solution to the plastic crisis. The campaign has garnered the support of everyday activists, celebrities, and campaigners, inspiring widespread change and encouraging others to embrace reusable alternatives.

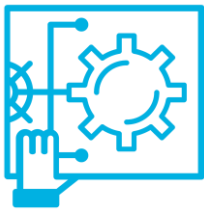
Between 2021 and 2023, over 80 countries participated, with more than 200 NGOs, brands, and organizations involved. Additionally, over 1,000 leaders, industry experts, policymakers, and activists took part in the Global Reuse Summit, further advancing the movement towards a plastic-free future.

PLANNING & MONITORING



Planning and monitoring have been central to the development and success of the Refill app, evolving from a national initiative to a global platform. Monitoring brands and businesses involved is a key aspect, ensuring they meet the sustainability goals of reducing single-use plastic. The app tracks its reach through metrics such as downloads, user engagement, and community participation. It has seen widespread adoption, with millions of users actively engaging to find refill stations for water, coffee, and plastic-free shopping. The impact of the app is also closely monitored, measuring metrics like the number of plastic bottles avoided and carbon emissions saved through reduced plastic production. Continuous monitoring supports the planning for future scalability, ensuring that more businesses, brands, and communities can join the movement, enhancing the app's global impact in the fight against plastic pollution.

APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY



EAT, DRINK AND SHOP WITH LESS WASTE

Anyone can download the free Refill app to tap into a global network of places to reduce, reuse and refill. From a coffee on your commute, to drinking water on the go, or even shopping with less plastic, Refill puts the power to go packaging free at your fingertips.



FREE WATER REFILLS

More than 330,000 Refill Stations offering water Refills globally!



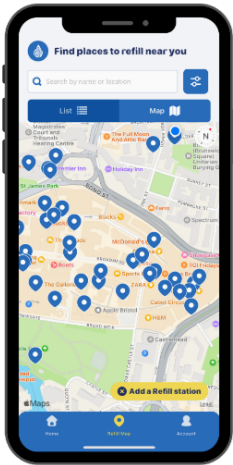
COFFEE ON THE MOVE

Find places offering discounts and rewards for bringing your own cup.



LUNCH ON THE GO!

Find places you take your own lunchboxes to get your food to go.



PLASTIC-FREE SHOPPING

Reduce pointless packaging when shopping, use the app to find refills.



RETURNABLE PACKAGING

Explore ways to borrow, return and reuse through the Refill App.



ADD REFILL STATIONS

Help grow Refill by [adding your favourite stops](#) to Refill.



Source: refill.org.uk

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT



The Refill app engages stakeholders through various initiatives, awareness campaigns, and by offering multiple ways for individuals, businesses, and organizations to get involved in reducing single-use plastic. Refill Community Schemes mobilize volunteers and local groups to drive change by promoting plastic-free alternatives and providing refill points. Refill Destination Schemes enable councils, businesses, and organizations to offer widespread refill options, transforming areas for residents and tourists. On a larger scale, Refill National Schemes involve governments and organizations expanding the initiative across countries. Universities also play a role through Refill Campus Schemes, reducing single-use plastic on campuses for students, staff, and visitors.

Individuals and organizations can get involved in several ways, multiple options being available for councils, universities, businesses, and environmental groups to contribute to the Refill initiative. Councils or businesses can lead by integrating widespread refill options within their areas, while local organizations or environmental groups can spearhead community-based schemes that promote sustainability. On a broader scale, governments and national organizations can facilitate Refill's global expansion by overseeing efforts at the country level. By taking on these roles, the Refill network continues to expand, increasing awareness and encouraging impactful actions.

Source: refill.org.uk





SOURCES

- Office for National Statistics – <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2022>
- City to Sea – <https://www.citytosea.org.uk/about-city-to-sea/> ; <https://www.citytosea.org.uk/campaign/refill/>
- Refill – <https://www.refill.org.uk/>
- Refill New Zealand – <https://www.refill.org.uk/>
- Refill My Bottle – <https://refillmybottle.com/about-us/>
- Refill not Landfill – <https://refilltheworld.com/places/united-states/oklahoma/oklahoma-city/refill-purchase/mapquest-driving-directions/>
- BBC – <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-bristol-57475805>



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