

## Litter Innovation Fund (LIF)

### Final Report

Further to your award it is important for us to evaluate how effective your research project has been and if the wider aims of the fund have been achieved.

The purpose of the Litter Innovation Fund is to support councils and communities in the development and evaluation of innovative approaches to tackling litter, which have the potential to be implemented more widely. The Litter Strategy also encourages people to use and contribute to online best-practice 'hubs', to help test and refine new innovations, share learning and extend the implementation of best-practice. It is therefore a condition of your award that you provide a full report of your project, to share in the knowledge and insights gained from your experiences and, if successful, to enable others to replicate it.

To assist these two aims, we require you to complete the following document. Section A sets out a template final report which is designed to provide the information needed to identify interventions with the potential for wider application, and to enable your project to be implemented by others if appropriate.. Please consult the monitoring and evaluation guidance for further help on answering any questions. You can also contact us at [LitterFund@wrap.org.uk](mailto:LitterFund@wrap.org.uk).

As set out in the guidance to applicants once we have signed off this report, successful applicants are expected to make the information from Section A of this template available online, to share best practice, enable others to replicate your project and learn from your experience. Information that you share with us may also be subject to requests for disclosure by Defra or MHCLG under the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations. It is likely therefore that information from this report will be released into the public domain. If there is any information contained in your report that you wish to remain confidential or regard as subject to copyright or commercially sensitive please clearly identify it. In particular, please do not include personal data of any individuals.

The completed form should be e-mailed to [litterfund@wrap.org.uk](mailto:litterfund@wrap.org.uk)

<b>LIF Reference Code</b>	ENG102-001 APP12 – PO1267	<b>Date</b>	31.01.19
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Thames21	<b>Completed by</b>	Alison Baker, Sarah Hardy, AJ McConville, Paul Hyman

### Project Abstract

Please provide an overview of this report, up to 400 words (Grant funding amount received, Aims, Results and Scalability of the project)

Marine plastic has garnered significant global attention due to increased awareness of the threats posed to aquatic wildlife. In June 2018, a grant for £9,500 was awarded to a London-based consortium to investigate how to best reduce single-use plastic (SUP) cups entering the River Thames from riverside bars, boat operators and events. We particularly wanted to examine how riverside bars could be encouraged to stop using SUP cups, with the assumption that removing the items from circulation is the most effective means of preventing them becoming litter. We aimed to identify the opportunities to phase-out SUP from bars and develop recommendations for bars and policymakers. We encouraged bars to commit to making the change and provided information on costs and suppliers of reusable cups.

A survey was sent to 163 pubs and boat operators and face-to-face meetings were held with pub-chain managers and stakeholders of the Annual Boat Race. It is clear that the environmental aims of the scheme are not disputed by bars: most recognise the impact of single-use plastic on the environment and have already engaged in the subject by phasing out plastic straws. We found over 40% of bars use SUP cups across London; the main reason for their use appears to be to maximise sales conveniently, rather than strict licensing requirements. 25% of all bars surveyed use SUP cups for primarily outdoor drinking (either at the end of the night to encourage customers to finish their drinks or during the summer months) and given the reduced likelihood for staff to recover these cups, this is potentially a significant source of SUP cups into the river. 6% of all bars use SUP cups only once a year for large events to cope with the extraordinary amount of demand.

Although 75% of bars had considered moving to reusables, it was apparent that most had not considered the practical or budgetary implications. At least 65% of those using SUP cups expressed an interest in information on costs and suppliers. Concerns were expressed about the upfront costs and the risk of cups not being returned. A number of districts have expressed interest in a system whereby neighbouring, competing bars would collectively purchase and manage a reusable cup that could be returned to any of the participating bars; thereby reducing the per unit cost of buying reusable cups. However, this will not work in

all areas and it was noteworthy that difficulties experienced by some bars in using reusables were not experienced by others - solutions will have to be led by bars to suit their particular circumstances.

Boat operators are similarly not required by licensing requirements to use SUP cups and the regulators of events and boat operators are likely to have a key role to play in facilitating a shift away from SUP cups.

The project has unveiled an unexpected appetite amongst a majority of bars for moving away from SUP cups and has provoked others to consider it. The action of speaking to bar managers and supplying them with information on costs and suppliers led directly to a number committing to change during the course of the project. The project has potential to be scaled-up as information on suppliers is applicable across the country and concern about plastic pollution a national phenomenon.

## Final Report

### What did you want to achieve?

Please set out the project context, purpose and aims. This will have been laid out in your original application. For sharing purposes please include this, and any clarification needed

- What specific problem(s)/area(s) did your intervention target, and why did you choose it? Please include a description of the local context.
- What did your intervention aim to achieve? Set out the intended outcomes and impacts.

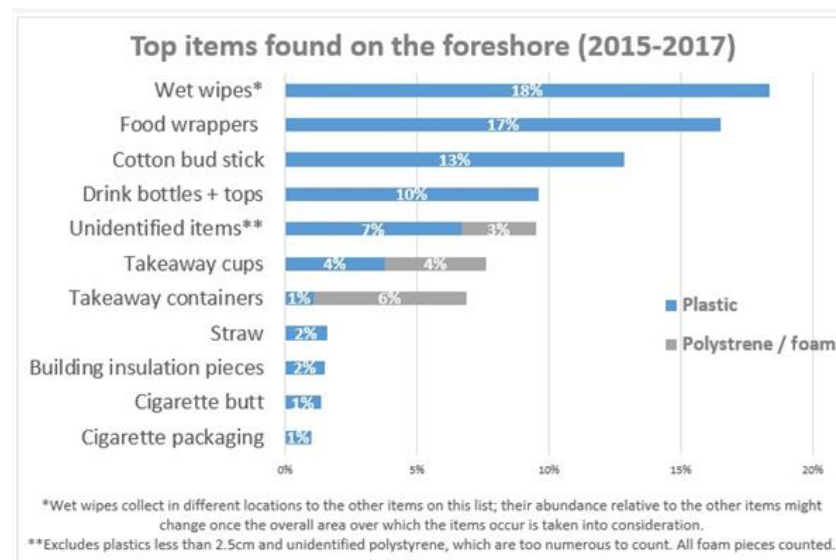
*In the Drink* is a new campaign - co-founded by Active360, Anti-Plastic People, Thames21 and consultant Alison Baker - that aims to reduce the use of single-use plastic (SUP) cups by riverside pubs, bars and the party boats that use the tidal Thames. SUP cups were selected not only because they were shown to be prevalent in the Thames but also because the sources of the cups are well understood. This gave the project a target to reduce flow of plastic pollution at its source.

Data collected by citizen scientists for the Thames River Watch project show plastic cups are in the 10 most commonly found items in surveys (see Graph 1). These can have a long term detrimental effect as the items break into micro-plastics that remain in the marine environment, with the potential to harm wildlife, and detract from the amenity value of the river.

The team are very grateful to **Thames Estuary Partnership** who carried out initial work on this initiative to enable it to happen including providing a detailed list of all riverside bars which saved the team considerable time and energy.

#### Graph 1. Top items found on the foreshore

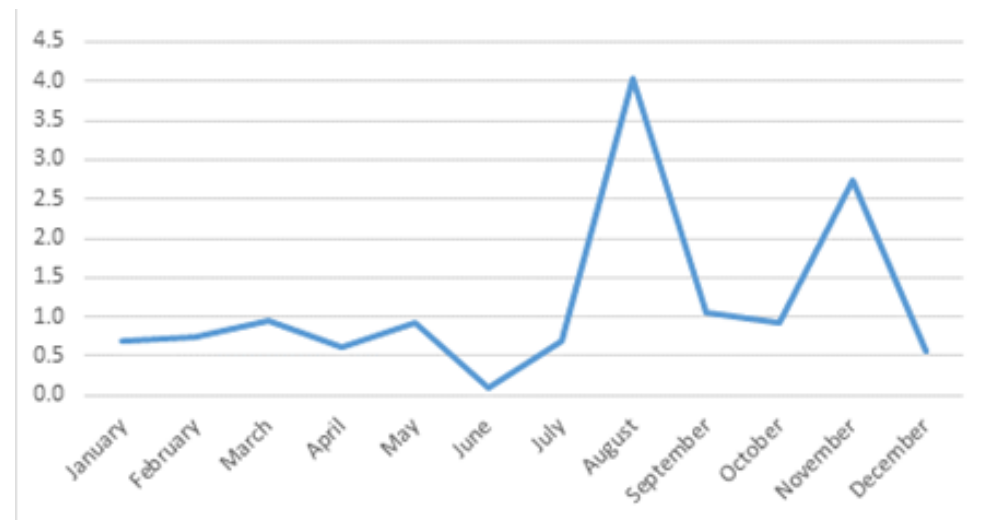
Further data found by citizen scientists showed a clear spike in the numbers found during the summer months, when the weather is hot and pubs and entertainment outlets extensively use plastic instead of glass for the sale of alcohol to the public. Graph 2 shows data collected in 2016.



**Graph 2: No. of single-use glasses found per m2 through Thames21's tidal Thames litter surveys in 2016**

The aim of the campaign was to engage constructively with bars, boat operators and events to start discussing the issue and work with them to identify barriers that need to be approached if there is to be a step change in attitudes to the river environment. The outcome would be for bars (and their owners) to commit to using reusable plastic cups as well as limiting the use of plastic straws and stirrers.

We have focussed on SUP cups as they are a very visible and iconic litter item that is prevalent in the tidal Thames. However, we also collect information on other single-use plastic items arising from bars with the intention of better understanding their usage. This is part of the long-term aim to eliminate the use of single-use plastics in bars adjacent to the tidal Thames, of which this project is the initial step.



### What was your project plan?

- Describe the project plan – what you intended to do, including details of intervention site(s), timelines, use of resources (e.g. materials) and involvement of people and other organisations. Include details of a control or comparison site, if applicable.
- How did you expect your intervention to achieve its aims and intended impacts (see the ‘intervention pathway’ diagram in the Monitoring & Evaluation guidance)

#### Intended aims and impacts of the intervention

The primary goal of the project was to reduce the amount of plastic litter entering the river generated by the use of SUP cups in riverside bars, boat operators and events by:

- supporting interested bars to switch to reusable cups by providing information on suppliers and costs; and
- better understanding the drivers that lead bars to use SUP cups and making recommendations to policy-makers, councils and Business Improvement Districts on how to facilitate change based on an improved understanding of the barriers and opportunities.

To do this, the project set out to:

- Collect data regarding the current usage of SUP cups in riverside bars to aid the generation of solutions. This includes establishing the percentage of individual bars and boat operators using SUP cups, when and why they were used, and any perceived barriers to change to reusables;
- Raise awareness of plastic pollution caused by single-use plastic cups in our waterways among riverside bars, events and boat operators; resulting in bar managers taking the environmental impact of their current product choices into consideration;
- Impact current supply systems within pub chains and boat operating companies via face-to-face meetings with senior management.

#### Project Plan - Activity Description (Target Date / Completed By Whom)

The project team followed the following project plan:

- A flagship event to promote the campaign (21 June 2018 / Active360)
- Recruitment and induction of team member to be based with Thames21 (20 July 2018 / Thames21)
- Prepare the approach with open questions: to ascertain the barriers to change and where there are opportunities (03 August 2018 / Thames21 with support from Authentic Consulting)
- Promote website: this will be used as a tool to showcase successes and highlight issues. Alongside coordination of social media (01 December 2018 / Thames21, Active360 and Authentic Consulting)
- Approach bar managers, owners, operators and breweries with the project brief and campaign aim (by 01 December 2018 / Thames21, Active360 and Authentic Consulting)

- Meet with bar managers, owners, operators and breweries - to discuss options and opportunities (01 December 2018 / Thames21)
- Project Team to meet monthly to keep up to date with plans, set targets and check in with progress (monthly / Thames21, Active360, Authentic Consulting and PLA)
- Thames21 Project Officer collates data to report on the level of interest; what are the barriers and concerns; the cost implications and cost savings; a timetable stating how long the process can take; the successes; what social media or platforms help to promote the idea; the challenges of a 'river friendly' scheme; whether paying for membership is a valid option (01 December 2018 / All)
- A promotional event to increase the momentum. (30 October 2018 / Thames21 and Active360)
- Completion of project (30 January 2019 / Project Team)
- Follow-up networking event with relevant industry stakeholders to promote the key messages of the report (April 2019 / Project Team).

### What was innovative about this project?

- Describe how your project differs from existing approaches, or extends/develops previous research.

*In the Drink* is unique in that (as far as we know) it is the only campaign/project in the UK that focuses specifically on single-use plastic cups created by riverside bars, and works with those bars, boats and breweries to prevent further pollution source. It builds on the excellent ground made by campaigns such as the [Last Straw](#) by the Evening Standard, which facilitated a step change in London in the perception around using plastic straws. [Glastonbury Music Festival](#) and [Northampton Saints](#) have introduced successful cup deposit schemes, which is similar to our project, but these differ in that they are closed, self-contained events or locations that can be more easily managed.

### What did you do?

- How did you implement your project in reality? Please describe what happened during your project.
- Did anything change from your original plan, and if so, why? Did you encounter any problems or unexpected issues that might have affected your results?
- How did people react during the project?

To enable others to replicate your project, please include images of any key signage, posters, graphics etc. that you used, as well as photographs, maps or other essential information to show how interventions were deployed. Documents can be provided as appendices if appropriate. The information you provide should not be subject to copyright and should be able to be shared freely





A distinctive brand identity was established from the outset, with '*In the Drink*' being chosen due to 'the drink' being a long-established idiom for a large body of water. The strapline 'Reducing Single-Use Plastic in Our Waterways' was added to clarify the purpose of the scheme/project, and a freelance designer was commissioned to fulfil the brief.

A website was created prior to making contact with bars along the River Thames, to ensure that information about the project was readily and publicly available. [www.Inthedrink.org.uk](http://www.Inthedrink.org.uk) clearly states the current problem with single-use cups making their way into London's waterways, while offering access to solutions and downloadable resources, such as a plastic-free checklist for riverside event organisers.

A short online survey was created to collect information on the types of cups, and other serving items being used, by 163 individual bars and boat operators situated on or nearby the River Thames. Respondents were given the option to answer further questions on the what, when and why aspects of single-use plastic cup usage (should they be willing to expand on the initial required answers) and to indicate their level of interest in seeing reusable plastic cups, what type (if any) branding they would be happy to see on the cups and the quantity they would need to replace single-use plastic cups. To ensure honesty and accuracy in responses, all were given on condition that names of bars, boat operators and events would be kept anonymous in the final report.

From the initial survey, six bars and two boat operators were chosen for more in depth conversations; these included those bars and one boat operator who had already phased out single-use plastic cups (or were in the process of doing so), plus one boat operator and bars who were interested but had concerns. This enabled *In the Drink* to assess perceived barriers to phasing out single-use plastic cups and/or introducing reusable polycarbonate/polypropylene plastic cups.





#### Flagship Event: Get On Board, 21 June 2018

On Midsummer Night, close to 100 paddleboarders took to the Thames at Kew Bridge, to paddle to River Lane in Richmond. On route they picked up plastic trash and got up close, and hands on, with the amount of plastic in this otherwise beautiful stretch of river. At the start of the event, and at Richmond, *Sky News* filmed and interviewed Paul Hyman from *In the Drink* regarding the scheme.

*In the Drink* was also discussed at the event's after party, and with the two West London MPs who had turned out in support (Ruth Cadbury MP took part and picked up lots of trash as well as doing highlighting the message on social media). Carolyn Newton and Carlos de Souza, of the Whale Company, joined on one of their final legs of a source to sea paddle on paddle boards made from plastic bottles.

As a result of the event's success, Richmond Business Improvement District who commissioned the event have asked to upscale it to 300+ participants for the next event on 21 June 2019, ensuring further great coverage for *In the Drink*.



### Promotional Event: TideFest, 2 September 2018

*In the Drink* hosted a stand at the annual TideFest festival, which celebrates the Tidal Thames. The team met local people, including Hounslow's Council Leader, the local MP, plus various councilors. *In the Drink* were able to introduce many people to the scheme and generate further support.

Several thousand attended and took part in numerous activities, both on and off water. These included a Paddle and Pick (clearing plastic on trees from paddleboards) and Active360's Natural History Tour of the Thames, which provided an opportunity to talk about *In the Drink* in the context of a rapidly changing and generally improving river environment.

In 2019 the event will grow again and *In the Drink* are invited back to encourage more people to get involved.

*Pictured (left to right): Ruth Cadbury MP, Samia Chaudhry (Hounslow Mayor), Martin Salter (Tidefest Organiser), Paul Hyman (In the Drink), Richard Aylard (Thames Water Sponsor), Carlos de Souza & Carolyn Newton (The Whale Company)*





**Implementation of the project became a combination of undertaking the following:**

- Sending out the survey to 163 pubs (and boat operators), chasing up and collating responses
- Researching potential suppliers of reusable polycarbonate and polypropylene cups, and working out costs for interested bars (APPENDIX A)
- Dropping into riverside pubs unannounced to talk informally with managers about the scheme, show reusable cup samples and get feedback. A number of these interactions resulted in more detailed discussions about specificities of the topography, demographic and operations for that pub and how this relates to both SUP cups and reusables - see APPENDIX B for list of these pubs
- Appointments with two boat operators to talk about operational issues and motivations to switch to reusables
- Liaising with the Port of London Authority to push forward on further contact with boat operators
- Email communications with upper management of large pub chains
- Meetings and emails with local authorities and Business Improvement District management in certain London riverside boroughs, to explain *In the Drink* objectives and recommend the Plastic Free Checklist For Events - see APPENDIX C. This interaction has been particularly useful in finding synergies between *In the Drink* objectives and the 'plastic-free' ambitions of BID and local authorities, in particular in relation to Boat Race.
- Social media to raise awareness of campaign on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
- Meeting with Fulham Football Club, alongside Thames21 (scheduled for February), to discuss litter initiatives and potential of promoting reusables cups in conjunction with changes being discussed in a local pub about serving in reusables on match days



**Indicators of willingness of businesses to engage with scheme:**

- 1 big pub chain is installing new storage in their busy riverside pub to accommodate reusables for Boat Race
- 1 big pub chain has said 'We are confident we can sort something so we don't use single use plastic during the boat race this year'
- 1 big pub chain has sent us information about their audit of plastic cups and circumstances under which single use is being used, which is currently under review. Awaiting an update on their current operations in phasing out single use plastic
- 31 out of 48 bars (or 65%) currently using single use plastic cups have sought further information from *In the Drink* on alternatives
- A line of riverside pubs with a busy embankment area are considering how to implement a collective cup deposit scheme
- One of the busiest riverside pubs in Fulham is researching how to phase out single use on match days in favour of a new reusable plastic cup
- One riverside local authority is seeking to impose the Plastics Free Events Checklist on the Boat Race organisers in event licensing.

- 2 other riverside councils have the Plastic Free Events Checklist in circulation and seek to impose similar requirements on Boat Race organisers to reduce plastic litter on the riverside
- Richmond BID and Putney BID are investigating buying reusable cups for distribution at events as a total phase out of single use plastic cups

### How did you monitor your intervention?

#### Indicators:

- What indicators did you set out to monitor, in order to help understand if your project achieved its intended outcomes and aims?
- Were you able to establish a baseline, i.e. by collecting information on the original state of your indicators, before your intervention began?
- What were your intended indicators of success?

The initial survey, housed online and conducted via email, phone and face-to-face interviews, indicated which bars and boat operators along the River Thames were using single-use plastic cups (and other 'disposable' serving items) and why. Collating this information also opened the line of communication with pub chain managers, breweries and boat operators, whereby their current systems and volumes of disposable cup usage could be evaluated via more in-depth, on site interviews. This process established a baseline, along with targets for intervention – i.e. those bars and boat operators who were open to joining the scheme and eliminating single-use plastic from their offer.

#### Indicators of success included:

- Responses to initial survey by 108 of 163 bars contacted (or 66%), plus 2 boat companies. This exceeded our initial expectations, in which we targeted a minimum of 33%.
- Of the 48 bars that use SUP glasses, 39 (81%) requested further information to hear about reusable alternatives
- Engagement with 10 pubs via face-to-face meetings and lengthy correspondence by email with brewery management - see APPENDIX B
- Conversations with multiple stakeholders around the Boat Race and developing common objectives to reduce litter this year. Helped the stakeholders recognise the common ground and range of interest to address this issue - see APPENDIX B

### Other influences and understanding causality

- How did you try to understand if any changes that occurred in your indicators were caused by your project, rather than other external factors?

- Were you able to identify and monitor a comparison or 'control' site?
- Describe the context and what happened during your intervention e.g. description of the weather, any events, any other campaigns (local or national), etc.
- What, if any, data/information did you record on external factors that may have influenced your data?
- How did you attempt to mitigate against them?

The conversation about reducing single-use plastic is in the mainstream narrative right now, and may well have been flagged up by pub managers, or those higher up the chain for large pub groups' CSR strategy, prior to *In the Drink* engaging with them. For example, most pubs spoken to have already (at least) moved plastic straws off the bar, in response to a media assault on this issue and shifts in public sentiment. This general awareness has made it easier for *In the Drink* to engage with pubs. However, after engaging with many pubs, it was apparent that the introduction of reusable cups in place of SUP has not been considered on a practical or budgetary level, as evidenced by our survey responses and conversations with pubs. These pubs had not yet looked at logistics, costs, or sourcing options for reusables, although were open to considering it.

The initial survey, informal conversations and social media engagement with pubs has prompted a more detailed interaction with this subject matter, and an assessment of costs. The *In the Drink* team has shown them samples, and provided information on suppliers, along with ball-park cost estimates on initial investments and the tilt point at which investment turns to cost savings.

The biggest boat operator disclosed during a meeting that their general Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy needed to soon include reducing plastic, but had not considered any suppliers, logistics or costs before approached by *In the Drink*. As a result of this interaction, they are now in contact with a supplier introduced to them by *In the Drink* and a discussion regarding trial opportunities for a new cup solution was planned for early 2019.

*In the Drink* interventions have taken the form of sending out the survey, following up with phone calls and emails, visiting pubs and boat operators, talking to senior management with control over multiple venues, engaging with pubs on Twitter (especially Youngs and Fullers); and utilising the video by comedian Bill Bailey to evidence celebrity backing in support of the *In the Drink* scheme. Meetings have also taken place with several local authorities, to discuss placing licensing restrictions on event organisers and stallholders on riverside stalls, and with several event organisers. *In the Drink* also provided information to a Richmond Councillor, to support a motion she tabled at Council, requesting a reduction in litter at Boat Race this year (2019).

*In the Drink* have presented the scheme to businesses at the Richmond BID summer event and autumn meeting, and at the Positively Putney Pubwatch meeting. A blog was written for the sustainable consumer website, [BuyMeOnce.com](http://BuyMeOnce.com), along with double-page spread feature for the River Thames Society's print magazine, *Thames Guardian*, and two articles mentioning *In the Drink* were published in both *Time Out*'s online and print magazine. In addition to these, *In the Drink*'s general press release (Introducing *In the Drink*) is published on community online publications in Putney, Wandsworth and Battersea.



Bill Bailey Chats About In the Drink - A New Scheme to Reduce...

45 views • 5 days ago

On a windy day in West London, Bill Bailey shares his dismay at the single-use plastic polluting our River Thames in London, along with his thoughts on our new scheme to help and encourage bars, boats and riverside events to call last orders on 'disposable' cups.

Visit <https://inthedrink.org.uk> for more details.

READ MORE

External factors that may have influenced *In the Drink* data, is a reluctance by some pubs to be truly forthcoming with information on the volume and reasons for Single-use plastic (SUP) cup usage - i.e. this could be a higher volume and more indiscriminate than disclosed - however, informal conversations have been far more forthcoming. To mitigate against underreporting in the survey, *In the Drink* have given assurances that information will be treated anonymously and is for the purpose of general data collection only, unless the business confirms otherwise. Communications have been aimed at promoting informal constructive discussion and careful communication of the scheme as a positive campaign, rather than a 'name and shame' campaign. Additionally, membership of the scheme has been communicated as a voluntary and free scheme, and one that is not strictly audited.

### METHODS: Data sources and collection

- How did you source or collect the data/information to measure the indicators above?
- For each data source, set out at what points during the project you collected data (and why), and at what locations. Include information on the data you collected before your project began.
- How did you make sure data collection was consistent?

Data collection occurred as follows:

- A list of 163 pubs/bars and boat operators, situated on or near the River Thames, was first compiled in a spreadsheet, along with contact details (address, telephone number, email address, social media handles) and, where possible, name of pub chain/brewery ownership.
- A short online survey was created, to evaluate 'disposable' cup usage by pubs/bars and boat operators, along with use of other single-use plastic serving items – i.e. cups, straws, stirrers, cutlery, condiment sachets and takeaway food packaging. The survey also asked under what circumstances single-use plastic cups were used, and if reusable plastic cups had been considered. Motivations for using/not using reusable plastic cups were also recorded, along with preferences for branding on reusable plastic cups and volumes needed, if they were to switch from 'disposable' cups to reusable plastic cups.
- Pubs/bars and boat operators were first contacted by email, by way of an introduction to the *In the Drink* scheme/initiative, with a link to the website and short online survey. Emails were followed up by phone calls and/or pub visits to aid survey data collection.
- Survey results were used to develop further questions for eight pub/bars/boat operators who had agreed to a further interview. Subjects included those who had already phased out single-use plastic cups, and those interested but who had concerns. This enabled further investigation into perceived barriers, and aided research into further solutions. One pub and one boat operator were also selected as Case Studies for the *In the Drink* website.

Consistency in data collection was ensured through the use of agreed reference documents at all times. For example, the online survey was replicated in a one page document for pub visits, which could then be easily transferred online.

### OUTCOME: Results and Data Analysis

Please record all the information derived from the project, using appendices if appropriate. As set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance, please include any assumptions made or qualifications needed.

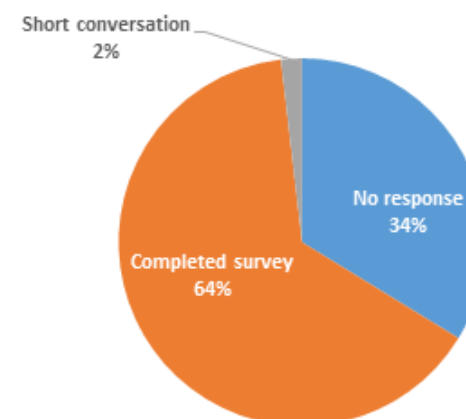
We have had responses from around two thirds of the bars contacted. It is quite possible that those who responded to the survey are those more inclined towards thinking about this issue and therefore potentially creating a bias in our results. There were a number of bars who hung up the phone as they had no interest. However, for the majority of bars it seems that they were simply too busy and didn't have time to answer the questions. We don't therefore think that the bars that didn't participate would change the results too much, but this is a consideration when interpreting the results.



#### Graph 4. Number of Responses as Percentage of Total Contacted

- From the 108 responses, we found that over 50% of the bars that responded do not use SUP glasses at all. 36% only use glass and a further 20% only use reusables when not using glass (see Graph 5).
- Nevertheless, about 6% of responses said they don't currently use them but might at some point in the future, if circumstances change (examples cited include opening of a new stadium nearby, expansion of pub to include outdoors or if more events were to be organised nearby etc.). This is a reminder that there are constant pressures on bars and SUP glasses remain a convenient option for bars.
- Over 40 percent of bars use SUP glasses. This suggests that there is quite a high number of bars that will need to change their practices in order to solve the litter and pollution problem.

Number of responses as % of total contacted ( $n = 163$ )

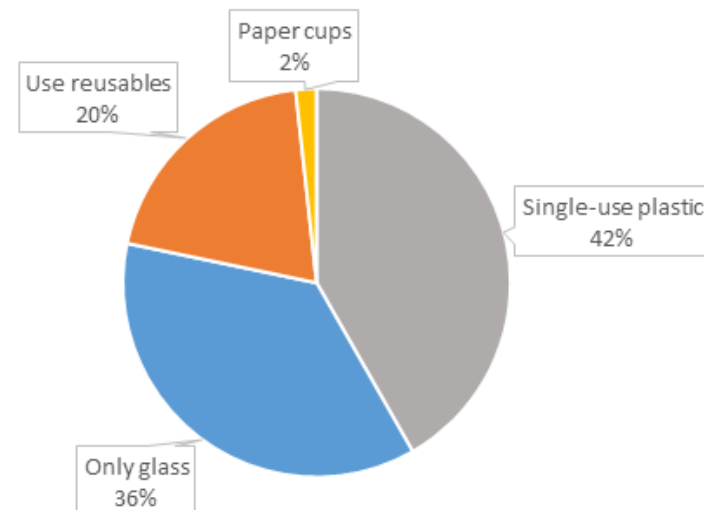


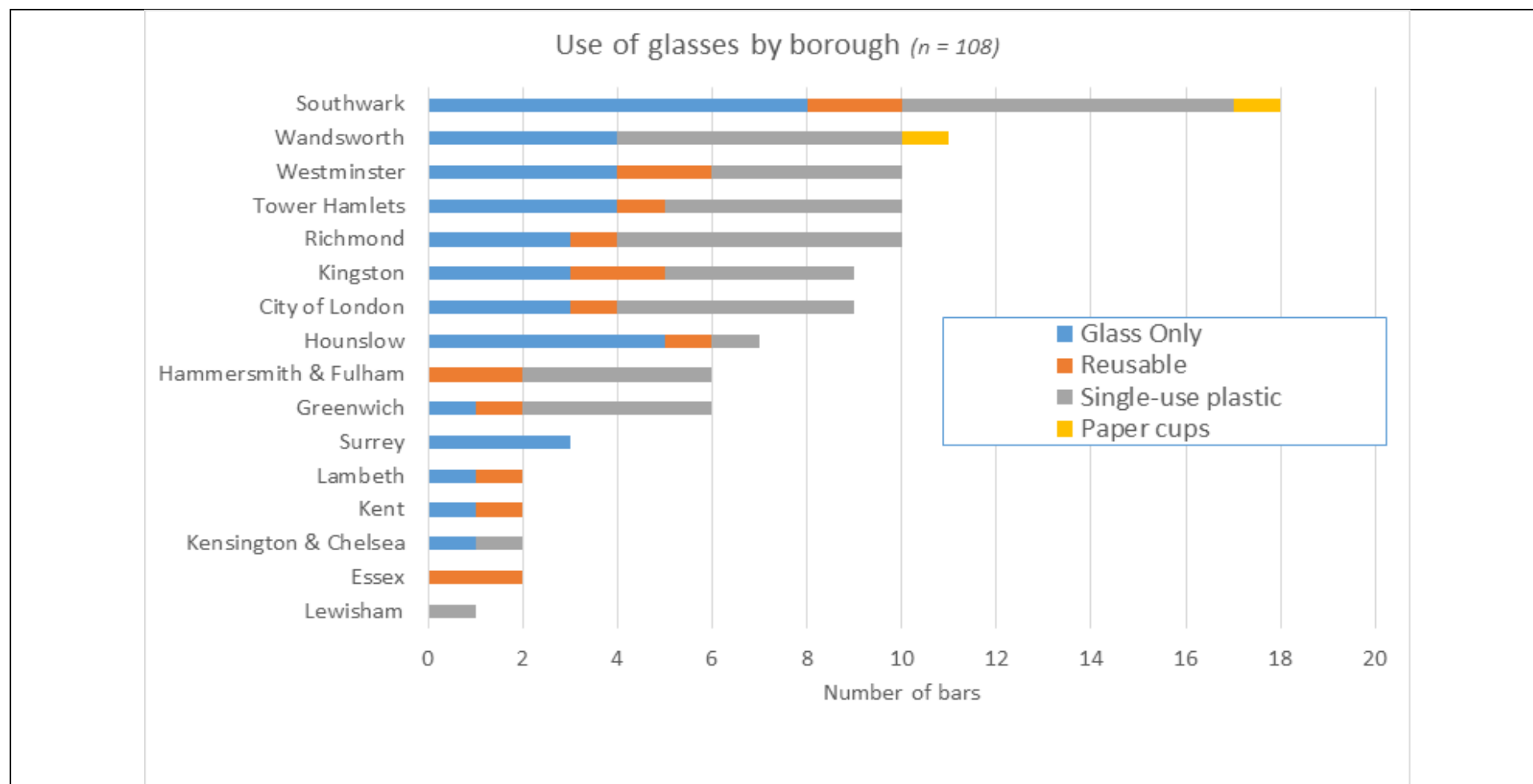
- One bar only uses SUP on the basis that they are too busy to wash glassware/reusables – and one boat company similarly only uses SUP as it has no washing up facilities.
- The borough by borough break down (see Graph 6) doesn't show any particular trend in terms of where SUP is used. SUP appear to be used fairly evenly across London, with not enough responses from Essex, Kent or Surrey to make any conclusions.

**Graph 5. What Glasses Bars Use (right)**

**Graph 6. Use of Glasses by Borough (following page)**

**What glasses bars use (n = 108)**

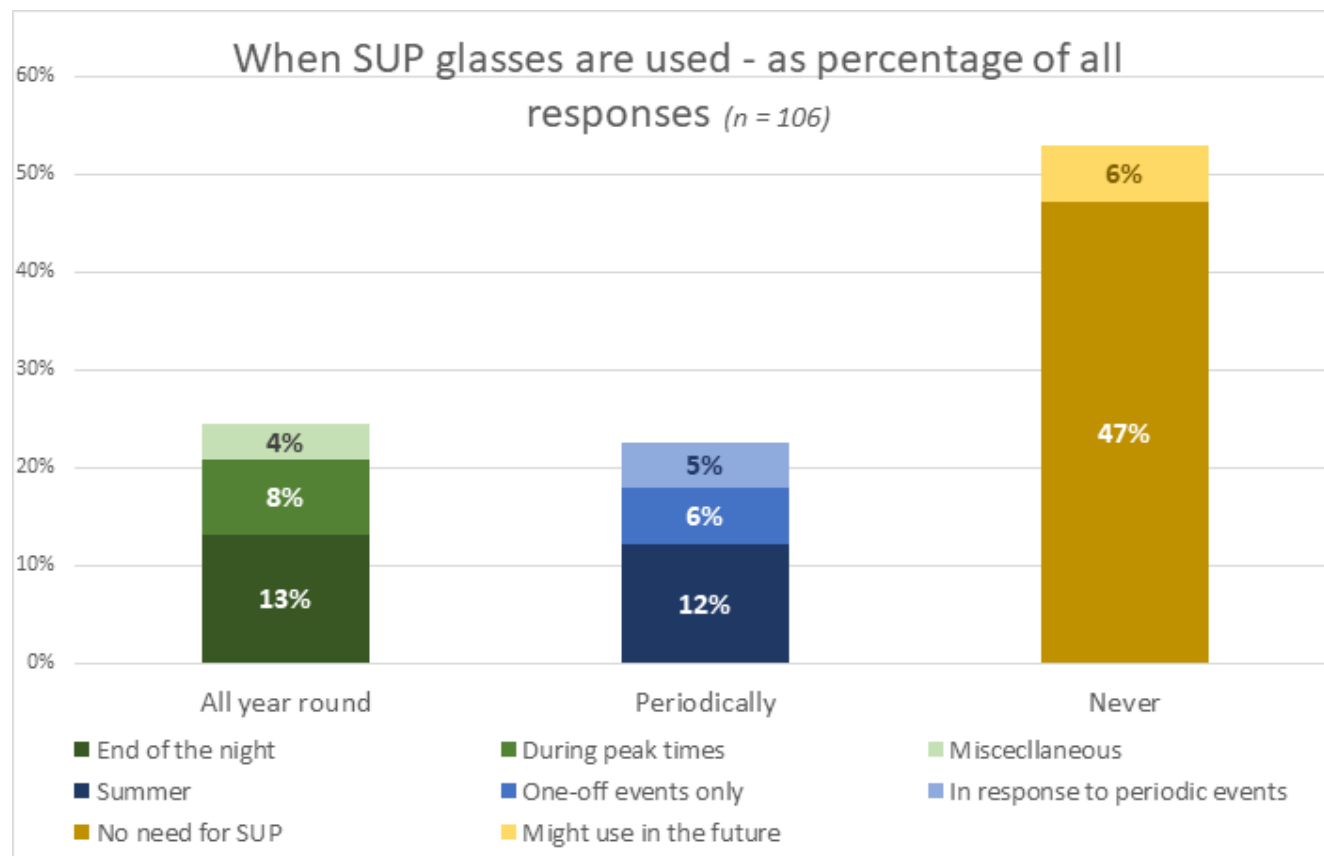




**Graph 7. When SUP glasses are used a percentage of all responses\***

*\*Note: this question was not asked directly in the survey and the dataset comes from a mixture of responses from the comment boxes or in interviews and, if absent, from the 'Reasons for using SUP' response in their survey. This might explain why there is an apparent discrepancy between Graphs 7 & 8 with respect to when glasses are used, in which Graph 8 suggests that the filling in gaps in supply of glasses during peak times was the biggest reason for using SUP. Higher value was given to the text responses over the survey tick boxes in which bars could give multiple answers. This was done as bars tended to identify the main reason for using SUP in the text boxes or during interviews.*

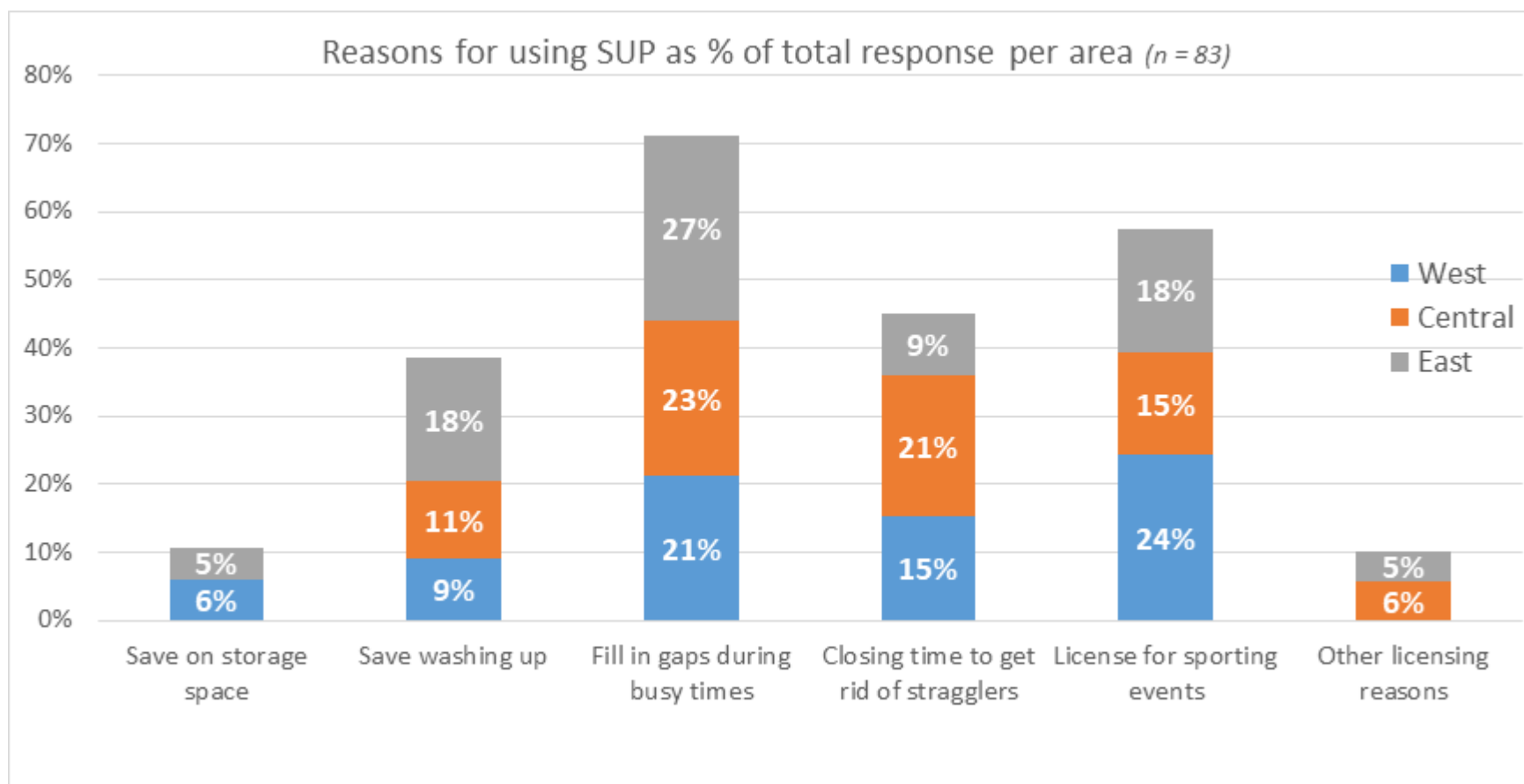
- There is an important distinction to make between those bars that use SUPs all the year round, while others only use them periodically (see Graph 7). This suggests that the solutions will be different for different bars.





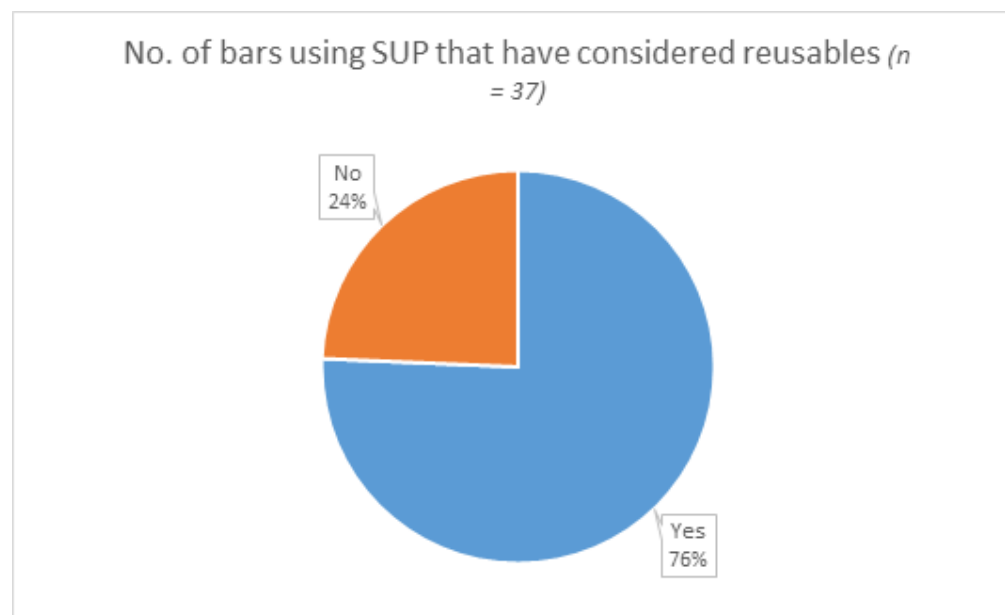
- 6% of total respondents (or 13% of those that use SUP) say they only use SUP once a year in response a major event. The event differs depending on where the bar is located (such as the Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race in west London, New Years Eve in central London or the London Marathon in east London).
- It is important to note that SUPs are used for summer-time drinking and at the end of the night together account for 25% of all bars surveyed as both of these occasions increase the likelihood that the SUP glasses will get out into the environment without being collected by bar staff. Tackling these two sources of the problem is a priority.
- In answering why they use SUP glasses (see Graph 8), bars could respond multiple times. 'Filling in gaps in glass supply during busy times' and 'License requirements for sporting events' were cited in 71% and 57% of cases respectively. Their use at closing time to get rid of stragglers represents 40% of responses, again stressing the importance of this use of SUP glasses regarding contributing to the litter problem.
- The sample is most likely too small to identify with confidence any significant differences between east, central and west London. Nevertheless, the breakdown in Graph 8 of the reasons for using SUP cups might suggest small differences, e.g.:
  - Sporting pressures could be greater in west London (e.g. due a number of stadia close to the riverside in Twickenham, Brentford and Fulham)
  - Getting stragglers out the door at closing time might be more of an issue in central London
  - Cups might be being used more to cope with peak times and to save of washing up costs in east London.

Graph 8. Reasons for using SUP cups as % of total responses



### Understanding of the problem

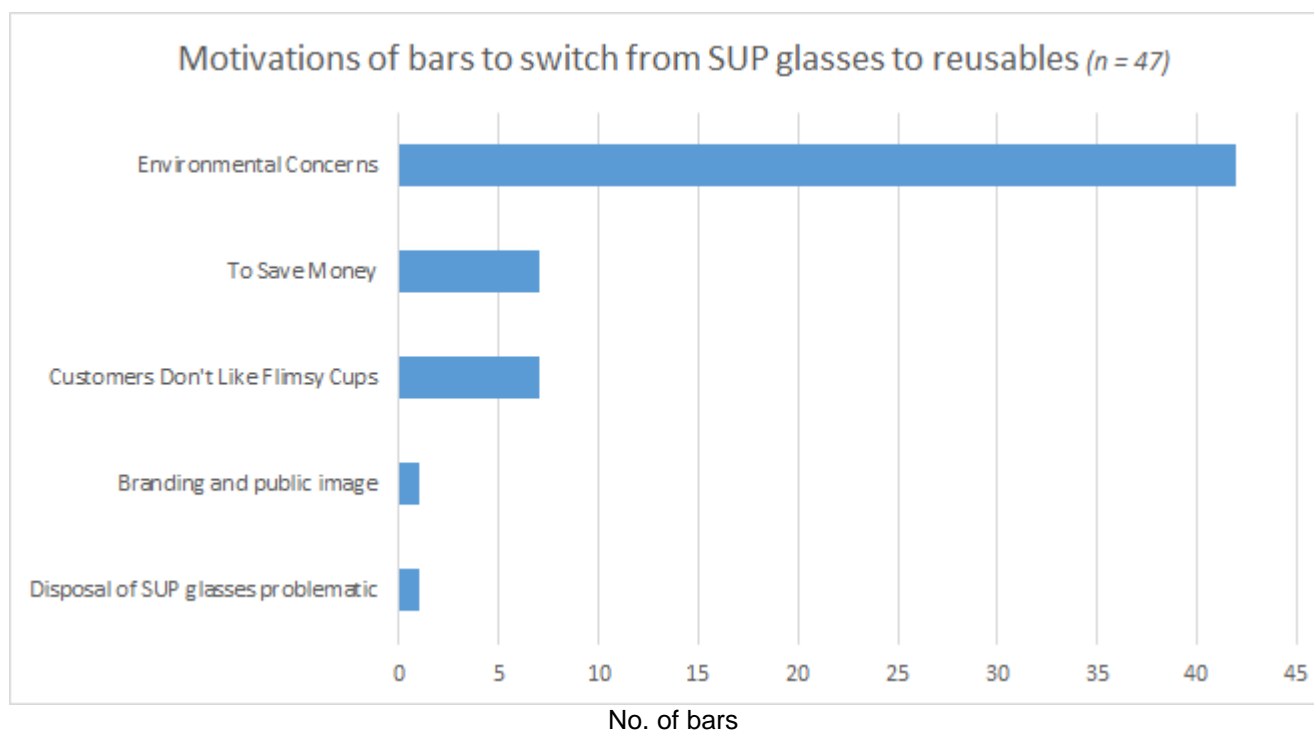
- The idea of a cup deposit scheme is considered more favourably by businesses than the project originally expected (see Graph 9). At the outset an assumption was made that the project's main impact would simply be convincing pubs there was a problem, rather than them willingly taking the information and taking action.
- The environmental aims of the scheme have not been disputed by pubs. Most pubs recognise immediately the reference in our communications to plastic pollution in waterways and that the leisure industry on the riverside contributes to this inadvertently. Graph 10 illustrates very clearly what bars have said in interviews and the surveys – almost all of the bars that answered the question on the motivation for an interest in moving away from SUP cited environmental concerns. While it's hard to know if this truly reflects their views on the subject, it suggests that the plastic pollution is already high on the radar of bars.
- Most bars have already taken some action against plastic straws, whether removing them from the bar and providing only on request, or investing in paper or bio-plastic straws. Regardless of the questionable environmental benefit of bioplastic straws, the conscious shift away from conventional plastic straws has brought plastic pollution into the conversation in pub operations and this has served as a useful point of introduction to *In the Drink*.
- Most bars agree that single-use plastic cups are not an ideal serving solution and use them as an overflow solution or for outdoors. For indoor use they prefer to use glassware as a matter of meeting customer preference.



Graph 9. No. of bars using SUP glasses that have considered reusables (above)



Graph 10. Motivations of bars for switching from SUP glasses to reusables\*



\*Note 1: Respondents could select multiple categories, hence total answers is more than total no. of responses

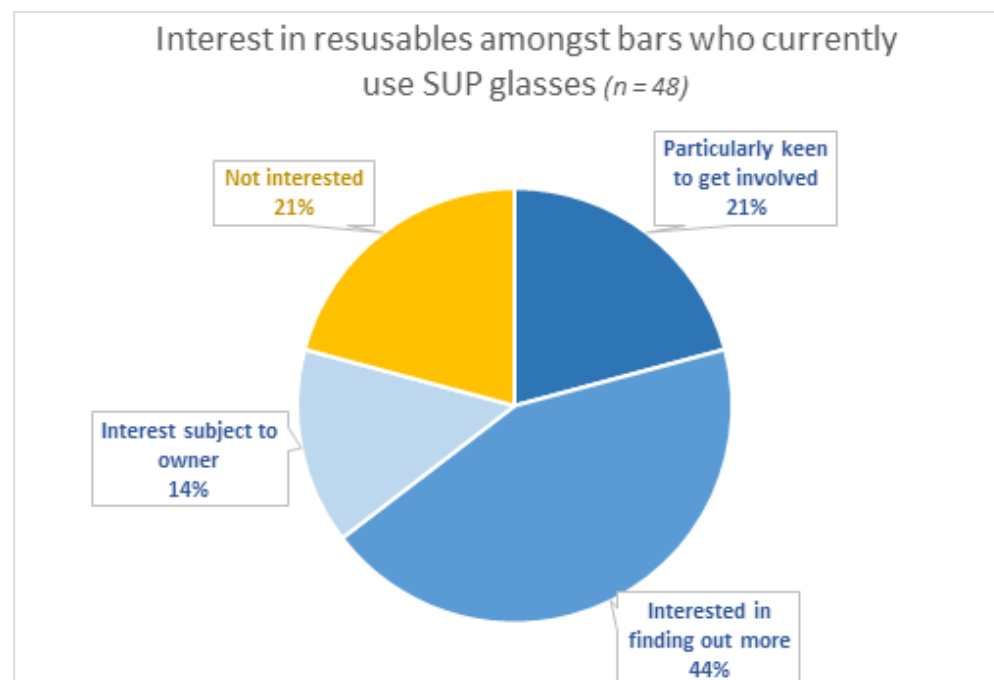
\*Note 2: The responses are from bars who have switched to reusables AND those who would consider switching

### Next steps

- Bars have, on the whole, responded well to being contacted. Of those still using SUP glasses, 21% were actively very keen to change and wanted help and guidance immediately, a further 44% were interested and wanted to know more, with 14% interested but acknowledging that we need to speak to the bar/chain owner about any next steps. 21% were not all interested (see Graph 11).
- On the downside, bars have not been so eager to sign up to the scheme - the project mistakenly assumed this would serve as an incentive for the pub to make changes, but this has not been the case. However, it has not been a negative aspect to the scheme because regardless they have taken the interest to learn more and look into new systems as a result of *In the Drink* engagement. Membership to the scheme has not been vital to further the project's objectives. And flowing from this finding is the conclusion that a paid scheme membership structure would not be an appropriate addition to the scheme, for the near future at least.

### Graph 11. Interest in learning more about reusables amongst bars who currently use SUP glasses

- The timetable for shifting from a reliance on single use plastic cups to reusables depends very much on the independence a pub has over their supply decisions. One pub, for example, was told from upper management that single use cups would no longer be available for ordering - and this required immediate implementation. Another pub has experienced several months of discussions with the central distribution centre to get reusable cups on the delivery list, and has had to adapt storage within the pub, and hopes to have this implemented by the date of Boat Race - in 4 months time. A number of other pubs are anticipating several months of exploring options for reusables and a cup deposit scheme, in readiness for the Boat Race in April. Therefore a conservative



timetable for implementation is say, 3 months, but if required the turnaround can happen within days (subject to running down a pub's remaining stock of single use cups).

- Each pub has its own particular experience based on crowd behaviour and location and this impacts the kind of system they use to cater for overflow. For example, a busy riverside pub in Hammersmith benefits from a big overspill onto the path outside the pub, but does not have a problem with reusable plastic cups not being returned. A busy pub in Richmond, with a grassy riverside terrace, is experiencing a loss of unmarked hard plastic cups because customers walk away with them and do not realise they are reusable. So, there is no one solution for pubs - all dependent on the particulars of topography and clientele, this is something that needs to be investigated on a case by case basis before making assumptions on best solutions.
- The main reason for resorting to single use plastic cups is to maximise sales conveniently, rather than strict licensing requirements demanding plastic cups be used outdoors. Health and safety licensing restrictions are rarely a mandatory requirement compelling the use of plastic cups outside.
- The serving logistics of boats is different from riverside pubs, so this must be taken into account when approaching them about the issues of plastic cup usage.
- Boat operators do not appear to have strict licensing requirements prohibiting all glassware on deck. Plastic usage is therefore optional. One company appears to use only single use plastic, whereas Turks Cruises have no single use cups in circulation on their charters. One other cruise company uses a hybrid system, with single use cups for scheduled routes and glassware for charters.
- A significant amount of plastic cups is probably coming from boat operators, either deliberately dumping or accidental. During the course of our research we received an email from someone who worked on a charter boat cruise on the Thames and reported large bags of cups were thrown overboard at the end of the evening. There are also a significant number of 'booze cruises' serving riverside football venues on match days, this is something we discovered by conversations with pubs near Fulham FC. Identifying which charter cruises operate these boats, and reaching out to them about this, requires outside assistance from the PLA or relevant licensing authority.
- Further inroads into boat operators may be difficult via communications from *In the Drink* alone. Outside assistance may be required to apply pressure on them for changing practices, in particular charter boats known for running 'booze cruises'. We have arranged a meeting with the PLA to discuss the extent of their licensing powers and influence over boat operators.

#### **Semi-Structured Interviews (APPENDIX C)**

Several more in depth interviews took place with bars and boat operators - including those who had already phased out single-use plastic and those interested but with concerns - to help identify any perceived barriers, and enable the team to develop viable solutions. Of those bars yet to phase out single-use plastic cups, the main reasons for continuing to use them were either to maximise sales (whether that be to meet demand, or to continue serving right up until closing time) and for sporting events, such as the annual Boat Race and match day screenings. All those interviewed, that still serve drinks in single-use plastic cups, stated that none of their customers enjoyed drinking from SUP cups, but accepted that it was standard practice to use them under such

circumstances. One pub stated that they used 3,000 SUP cups in one day during Boat Race, and another stated that they'd had 100,000 customers over the summer, and had no other way of meeting demand. Lack of storage space and suitable washing facilities also played a large factor in pubs relying on single-use plastic cups.

### Case Studies

As we have seen, circumstances will be different for each bar in terms of the challenges they face in phasing out SUP cups. Nonetheless, 20% of bars are already using reusables, and in most cases, it seems to be working well. We highlight two bars that have had positive experiences of phasing out SUP cups.

#### Case Study 1: The Blue Anchor

Environmental concerns were the main reason for The Blue Anchor in Hammersmith to phase out single-use plastic cups. "We benefit from this great location so we are responsible for keeping the area free of single use plastic cups. We phased them out as soon as the chain bought this pub. This has had zero negative financial impact." The owners are very much into sustainability, and there have been no problems with storage space, glass related violence, or meeting customers needs at peak times. They only use glass or reusable hard plastic cups for events, and when it comes to getting those stragglers out of the door at closing time: "They have to drink up and leave. If they have a reusable plastic cup outside, they leave them nearby for us to collect." The manager went on to state that senior management would be keen to learn more about *In the Drink* and have all 11 of their pubs listed as joining the scheme. Final word of advice to other pubs: "It is easy!"

#### Case Study 2: Turks Launches

Environmental concerns were also the reason that Turks eliminated single-use plastic from their boat cruises on the River Thames in South West London. Turks run seven scheduled and private charter boats from Kingston to Richmond (weddings, parties etc.) and, aside from the plastic water bottles they give to their staff (which were due to be switched to reusable bottles at the time of interview), are totally plastic free. Turks were also instrumental in running the Great River Race in 2018 and booked Fullers to supply the beer via a cup deposit scheme – they used Stack Cups and they had a really high return rate. Having seen so much plastic going into the river from the heaving pubs in Kingston in the summer - plus the many half marathons going through Kingston – they're very keen to sign up to *In the Drink* straight away.

#### Potential negative outcomes to switching to reusable plastic cups in pubs

There are potential negatives we envisage, and this needs monitoring to ensure this is limited and controlled, as follows:

- One pub has had a negative experience with using reusable plastic cups. Upper management removed all single use plastic cups from their catering supply list, so this has been enforced from above. However, the cups are not all being returned to the bar, and therefore they are experiencing a financial loss (pub on Richmond embankment). However, the bar manager believes a system that gives incentive to customers to return the cup to the bar will work, plus clear text on the cup explaining it is not disposable. This new system has not yet been implemented but is under discussion. (It should be noted that not all pubs with a reusable hard polycarbonate cup will automatically experience significant loss of cups - one other busy riverside bar has no problem with loss of cups. )
- Another potential unintended consequence of adopting reusable cups may be that the pub gradually replaces glassware with this system. This is unlikely to occur as all pub managers we have spoken to agree glassware is far preferable as a matter of customer choice.
- One potential danger is that pubs underestimate the number of cups they need to cater for their busiest times of the year, or the rate at which the cups need wash and turnaround, thereby exposing the pub to lost sales, and undermining the cost savings they believed the reusable cups would generate, or causing a reversion back to single use cups for this overflow. This needs to be avoided by generous estimates being made at the outset by pubs on cup quantities to cater for the busiest day, and staff, collection and washing systems in place to keep up with required turnaround throughout the day or ready for the next day.
- Pubs also need to be able to clearly communicate the cup deposit scheme system to their customers as the point of sale or strategic points in the pub, and the reasons for this, such as using simple text such as “Ocean Friendly” / ‘River Friendly’ Cup deposit scheme operating at this pub, return your reusable plastic pint and half pint cups to the bar to get your £1 back.’table talkers, signs on the entrance and at the bar.
- *In the Drink* also faces the risk that some unreturned cups may end up in the river regardless of systems to prevent this, and in addition to contributing to plastic pollution, our scheme and the pub may confront bad publicity as a result. So we need to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme going forward and take note of any problems of cup returns being experienced by pubs. A further negative consequence is that once a large loss of cups occurs the pub will then be required to place another large minimum order with a supplier, and delivery time may be 4 weeks, leaving open the danger of reverting back to single use plastic cups.

This has highlighted the need to treat each pub on a case by case basis, considering location and clientele, and that for some pubs text on the cup is mandatory to ensure return of the cups to the bar.

### Impacts and Evaluation - What did you learn?

- What were the outcomes against your indicators, and were they as expected? Please provide details of immediate, intermediate and long term impacts. Can you demonstrate that the outcomes would have been different if intervention had not taken place? Did any negative consequences arise? Which interventions, or aspects of your intervention, were particularly effective, and why?
- If outcomes/impacts were not as expected, it's useful to know why. Did you identify what factor(s) contributed to the project not working as intended?

Outcomes exceeded the original project research scope. Communications flowing from the initial survey prompted discussions with pubs during our research, uncovering an interest in taking action on plastic cups. This project has resulted in an immediate impact, as many riverside pubs are now considering investing in reusable cups, and at least one big pub chain is in discussions with a recommended supplier. When contact was initiated with many pubs, they had not yet considered the costs, and returns and logistics, on using reusables. This intervention has therefore prompted action that may well not have occurred otherwise. The intermediate or long term impacts cannot yet be fully determined as these first 6 months have been focussed on research and gathering insight from breweries and bars.

One outcome that has not been as successful is having an impact with boat operators. The *In the Drink* team would prefer to have support from the Port of London Authority (PLA) before making contact with more boat operators. Any collaborations on communications with boat operators require further work and discussions with the PLA and this is work in progress.

#### Positive impact of the project:

- A relationship built with Putney BID (*Positively Putney*) via this project has resulted in the most direct positive impact of the project.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence of the project, the BID purchased 14,000 reusable cups to be used by eight pubs along the river and high street in Putney. The re-usable cups were trialled by three pubs during the Thames Boat Race, which is one of the key events that bars identified above as creating extraordinary peak demand that has convinced many bars to use SUP cups. As each of the pubs serves around 5,000 pints on Boat Race Day, we expect up to 15,000 SUP cups were spared from used during the race, of which a small percentage would likely have ended up in the river. According to their own

<sup>1</sup> <http://positivelyputney.co.uk/putney-pubs-lead-the-way/>



estimation, each pub serves approximately 3,000 cups per week, so if all eight make the switch, over the course of the summer (i.e 12 weeks) we could expect the use of circa 288,000 SUP cups to have been avoided.

- Another row of busy riverside bars with outdoor space on the river frontage that use both SUP cups and reusables have suggested a collaborative approach to tackle the issue of glasses not returning which would see the joint purchasing and managing of reusable cups that could be returned to any of the participating bars (potentially as a cup deposit scheme). This would have the advantage of increasing the chances that cups will be recovered (as staff from all bars will be working together) and simultaneously educating their clientele and creating a local culture and awareness.
- One chain has said they are now confident no single use plastic cups will be used at Boat Race, this is following our chasing up via email, pub visits and social media, and a referral to Green Goblets cup manufacturer. A very large pub right on the river that currently resorts to single use plastic cups every match day is now considering investing in reusable plastic cups to counter the expense and waste generated regularly at their venue. This is a far better outcome than we expected, we had expected our initial progress would be getting on board the scheme those pubs already implementing new systems of cups.

#### **Unsuccessful interventions**

- One very busy pub refuses to consider reusable cups because they are convinced they are efficient in containing all cup loss. The pub in question claims reusables are impossible due to space restrictions and limited dishwashing in their Heritage listed pub. We have suggested to them they consider very closely the space implications of using reusables that stack efficiently, and allocate extra time to staff to wash up cups, this may be time that is not allocated to collecting up cups left outside. So far we have not heard a counter-response to this suggestion, however, the chain group has told us they are now considering reusable cups for their pubs during Boat Race, and we hope a successful trial of this in Boat Race will translate into wider policy across other riverside pubs. Communications with this pub chain are ongoing and gentle follow up is important to see this through to a general riverside change in outdoor serving systems.

#### **Any recommendations or policy changes that would help address the barriers for bars**



- The collective participation of bars in one area, as described above, is an intriguing idea that had not occurred to project team. This is probably best operated at the level of BID or a suite of pubs in close vicinity.
- A clear and present risk of a shift in legislation taxing single-use plastic usage would prompt bars to get moving to switch from single use plastic. The chances of a drastic shift is unlikely.
- Enforcement of littering by pubs will also help with this, however enforcement is a difficult exercise and is unlikely to occur
- Changes in council enforcement and licensing powers in relation to single-use plastic in temporary event licenses. If Councils are now seeking a shift in policy towards imposing conditions on temporary event stallholders this may need to be supported by changes in statutory powers - this requires further research and discussion with relevant council departments.

#### **Lessons learnt about boat operators**

Our main focus has been riverside bars, but some time has been spent on approaching 3 boat operators and this is what we have learnt:

- The serving logistics of boats is different from riverside pubs, obviously, so this must be taken into account when approaching them about the issues of plastic cup usage.
- We were surprised to learn boat operators do not have strict licensing requirements prohibiting glassware on deck.
- We have met with 2 boat companies with very different outlooks on reusable cups. One busy boat service currently uses only SUP in its regular service, but uses glass during some charters for a more professional look. Current logistics include no washing facilities & limited storage on the boat, and only have one drop off/collection point for supplies along their river route. Following engagement with *In the Drink*, the company is currently reconsidering these logistics to determine the workability of reusable cups - either purchased outright or rented regularly - as part of their wider CSR environmental strategy. A contrary approach is taken by a cruise operator Turks Launches which for a long time has considered it integral to its environmental responsibility to ensure no SUP plastic cups are served on the boat, or across other food and beverage servings wherever possible.
- Some boat operators may be unwilling to consider phasing out single use plastic without having some form of pressure applied, and we need a strategy to engage with these operators. We have tried on a number of occasions to engage with one charter company running party cruises. We have photographs from a party on one of their charter boats showing piles of SUP cups and rubbish on the deck and inside the boat. They have not responded to our emails. We have received anecdotal accounts of bags of cups being thrown overboard by staff at the end of the night on an

unnamed charter cruise boat. We have also been informed there may be a considerable plastic cup littering source from charter boats delivering over 1000 football supporters to a football stadium on match days. Finding out who operates these charter boats, and engaging with them, is a very different task than walking into a pub and having an informal chat with the pub manager.

#### **Any policy changes or recommendations that would help address the barriers for boats**

In relation to our contact with boat operators, we anticipate we may need the support of the Port of London Authority who have communications with boat operators, and issue licenses.

#### **What would you do differently?**

- What, if anything, would you do differently if you ran a similar project again?
- If outcomes/impacts were not as expected, do you think the factor(s) you identified as contributing to the project not working as intended could be overcome were the project repeated, and if so, how?
- What advice would you give to anyone else running this type of intervention?

#### **Media Coverage**

The project would have benefitted from the backing of a major media outlet, and/or a focused social media campaign. For example, the *Evening Standard* could partner with *In the Drink* as it has done with *Sky Ocean Rescue* in publicising the urgent need for business to take a stand against single use plastic use in their operations. A media listing or mention of one pub or pub chain switching to only reusable cups would generate interest from competitors.

#### **Sponsored Cups**

A different angle to explore is for *In the Drink* to secure a sponsor for a bulk order of reusable cups to sell on to pubs at a subsidised rate. This may appear to be an ideal solution to incentivise pubs to take up the option of cups below market rate. However, there is a danger that a free or heavily subsidised cup may not be sufficiently valued by staff and return of cups will not be seen as a priority, resulting in loss of cups and undermining the project, while adding to the plastic pollution problem (with *In the Drink* branding on the discarded cups). A further caveat on branding is that cups are taken away as a souvenir if branding holds some artistic/significance, thereby reducing stock numbers and the efficacy of the scheme.

### How to Build on the Scheme

Once a pub chain has fully implemented a successful new system of cups, this sends a clear message to compel other chains to consider adapting. The scheme can be built further by enthusiastic promotion of these pub chains to ensure they do not relapse into using the old system of single-use plastic cups. Further building of the scheme will require a focus on listing and surveying of canal-side pubs in London. The initial project list of 163 pubs was focused on the tidal Thames, there is an opportunity to include canal-side locations. Some of these will fall within the pub chains already engaged with, but this also requires research. Some follow up research may also be needed to monitor success: Are cup numbers remaining steady in those bars using a cup deposit scheme? How much leakage/loss of cups is experienced? Are pubs investing in replacement cups?

### What May Not Work As Intended And How Will This Be Overcome

There are potential negatives envisaged, and this needs monitoring to ensure this is limited and controlled, as follows:

- Loss of reusable cups due to inadequate communication with customers: for example, one pub has had a negative experience with using reusable plastic cups because they are not all being returned to the bar, and are littered and thrown in bins. The bar manager believes a system that gives incentive to customers to return the cup to the bar will work, plus clear text on the cup explaining it is not disposable. This new system has not yet been implemented but is under discussion. Pubs must therefore clearly communicate the reusability / cup deposit scheme system to their customers as the point of sale or strategic points in the pub. Text on the cup such as 'Ocean Friendly' / 'Return this cup to the bar for your deposit', table talkers, signs on the entrance and at the bar. (It should be noted that not all pubs with a reusable hard polycarbonate cup will automatically experience significant loss of cups - one other busy riverside bar has no problem with loss of cups. )
- Underestimating stocks of reusable cups: It is important a pub choosing to shift to reusable cups makes an accurate estimate of how many cups they need and buys this amount at the outset. They need to estimate the number of cups needed on a busy day, and factor in how long it will take to wash and replace cups over the day/weekend. If this is not estimated correctly, the pub will run out of clean cups and be left exposed to potential lost sales. This potential problem can be avoided by generous estimates being made when ordering the initial batch of cups by looking at historically busiest days, and staff allocations for collecting and washing cups in place to keep up with required turnaround.. Pubs should be urged to order a large initial order with the supplier to avoid further the problem of reordering of expensive minimums and a lengthy 4-6 week lead time for production.
- *In the Drink* also faces the risk that some unreturned cups may end up in the river regardless of systems to prevent this, and in addition to contributing to plastic pollution, the scheme and the pub may confront bad publicity as a result. Therefore it is important to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme going forward and take note of any problems of cup returns being experienced by pubs.

**Advice for others running this type of intervention:**

- Don't assume every pub's needs are the same
- Know about the problems with bioplastics and be prepared to respond to pubs/venues who think this is a sound environmental solution
- Know at the outset the general figures on a pub's up-front investment costs in reusable cups
- Read the CSR statements of the pub ownership to get a view on the pub's positioning on this issue
- Be prepared to give an honest appraisal of a pub's existing serving system, including potential flaws and potential for plastic pollution
- Follow up on requests for samples immediately, this pilot project has not had the resources to fulfill these requests

**What did it cost**

Please provide details of your full project costs and contributions in kind (regardless of source), to enable others to understand the funding required to replicate your intervention. This could also include resource cost. Remember to include the costs of monitoring and evaluation. Be specific.

**Table 1. A summary of the total cost (including grant contribution values and match funding value) of the project to date**

Expenditure Description	Match Funding Value	Grant Contribution Value	Total value
Meeting room hosting - 2 hrs	£640	£0	£640
Thames21 staff time	£1,488	£2,000	£3,488
Project Management Costs: Active360	£1,670	£850	£2,520
Project Management Costs: Alison Baker	£7,710	£850	£8,560
Project Management Costs: Thames21 / Consultant	£0	£5,000	£5,000

Volunteer Time @ £50 per day	£100	£0	£100
Volunteer Time @ £50 per day	£50	£0	£50
Volunteer Time @ £50 per day	£50	£0	£50
Webpage design	£0	£800	£800
	<b>£11,708</b>	<b>£9,500</b>	<b>£21,208</b>

For a breakdown of costs to bars to shift to reusable See APPENDIX A - COSTS & ROI FOR REUSABLE CUPS

### Next Steps

Based on what you have learned:

- How are you planning to build on the activity yourselves?
- If the project was successful, how could/should this intervention be replicated and/or scaled up by you or others?
- If the project was not successful, how might it be changed to potentially deliver better results?
- What further research or refinement is needed?

Based on the analysis of this process, there is clearly greater potential to make reusable cups a new best practice for all riverside pubs/boats and events (where glass is not a viable solution). However this requires continued pressure and chasing to realise this potential.

#### Next Steps Needed for *In the Drink* To Keep Up Momentum

##### Minimum scenario for ongoing life of scheme:

- Press and industry event in Spring



- Follow up support for those pubs interested in engaging with the scheme to ensure they receive the information and encouragement to make the transition
- Produce pledges (if requested) by venues wanting to use *In the Drink* as publicity for their pub, and list their venue on *In the Drink* website and social media
- Continued website presence
- Circulate report and its recommendations
- Respond to enquiries from other parts of the country/internationally who also seek to implement this kind of initiative
- Secure some ongoing funding for minimum continuation of the scheme
- Engage with riverside borough councils - Events Management /Licensing / Plastics Initiatives in Council / Environmental Departments to let them know about the scheme and provide them with the Plastic Free Checklist for Event, encourage incorporation of Checklist into Licensing policy
- Funding model for a potential revenue stream from commission percentage on recommendations of reusable cups, advertising on cups or a sponsor willing to champion this in a new region

#### **Ideal Scenario for Ongoing Life of Scheme:**

- Expand the model to the full length of The Thames, from source to sea, plus involve canals, and the organisers of large public events. At present the riverside events we have looked at are Boat Race and Great River Race, but this has potential for further events such as Thames Regatta and others within central London. Work on canals includes extending *In the Drink* to the Notting Hill Carnival which causes significant rubbish spillage onto canalside, and recent conversations with Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea Councils may make this a feasible goal.
- Create dedicated teams focusing on each sector of the leisure industry: riverside pubs / sports clubs & venues / riverside festivals / boats on Thames and canals. A slightly different approach is needed for all these sectors, and understanding of the particulars of their business needs.
- Undertake a light-hearted survey with pub customers, or an informal vox pop interview, to ask about their views on using single use plastic cups vs reusables. Use results on social media and tag local pubs.
- Engage with riverside and canalside developers and Business Improvement District and owners of large residential and commercial development encouraging incorporation of Checklist points into licenses for cafes, bars and canal and riverside events as a waste reduction strategy
- Engage with the PLA and the CRT productively to seek supporting action in furtherance of our environmental objectives
- Funding model for a potential revenue stream from commission percentage on recommendations of reusable cups, advertising on cups or a sponsor willing to champion this in a new region



There is a general conversation about reducing single use plastic in pubs, and there is now a space in which to move from discussion to investment in new systems. There are obstacles to this change, both received thinking and logistical, and the continued and diplomatically communicated pressure on pubs to change is required to realise these changes. If *In the Drink* does not continue, there is the chance this will fade out, or they embrace ineffective schemes that fail to address the issue, such as the Simply Cups recycling system which fails to capture riverside overflow of traffic from pubs.

One riverside pub in Fulham is of particular interest to *In the Drink*. Their transition away from single use cups as a big win for the scheme and a clear message to their higher management and competitors that change that large scale use of reusables is feasible. If a cup deposit scheme can be rolled out over that pub which benefits from a premium, riverside location and limitless overflow, then the case study from this can support the case to upper management of this chain for roll out of reusables across all of their venues. The success for this chain can then be conveyed to competitors for them to follow suit.

#### **Potential For Replication of The Scheme**

The costs and supplier information provided by the project is applicable across the whole of the UK, which means that the methods adopted in this project could easily be applied elsewhere in the country, in rural and urban areas alike. The successful engagement with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) similarly has the potential to be repeated across the UK, more likely in urban areas where BIDs mostly operate.

Continued engagement with - and pressure on - the large pub owners and breweries from initiatives across the country as these entities has the potential to create a swift move away from SUP cups on a large scale across their networks, if decisions are taken at the appropriate level of the organisations. Efforts to link consumer demand for change with company activity could be very beneficial. Once a new cup scheme is successfully embedded in a pub chain for their riverside pubs, or across a mix of competitor pubs in at least one area, traction then exists to support the case for this occurring in other cities with major UK waterways. Success with riverside pubs that are also brewers can also have potential to extend change within large events/festivals, if they see both PR and commercial benefits of cutting out single-use, they may then have greater desirability to big events promoters seeking out suppliers who can accommodate reusable cup systems at events. As more festivals make the switch to greener alternatives to single use, those suppliers who can provide this will be favoured over others and they benefit from being part of this virtuous circle for this system to become the norm at events.

At this stage, the project team is focussed on extending the geographical reach beyond Greater London, rather than shifting to leisure industries other than bars, temporary events, venues and boats. The supply solutions are not readily applicable across other areas of the leisure industry and can best serve the interests of reducing plastic pollution in waterways by continuing the focus on this sector. However, it is reasonable to envisage that a success in changing practice in one sector of the leisure industry will have a knock on effect for neighbouring cafes and restaurants and retail to audit unnecessary single use plastic use.



#### Further Research

Further research is needed on how licensing and operations works on boats on the Thames and canals - which statutory body oversees this? Who is influential in leading change? Does the PLA or the Canal & River Trust have any powers in relation to monitoring and enforcing against boats suspected of polluting the Thames with plastic from their operations?. Research is needed into the extent of powers within local authorities to limit stallholder use of single use plastic.

#### Is there any other information you wish to share?

e.g. Any media regarding the project, correspondence with those affected by intervention, or anything else of relevance.

#### Links to Media Coverage

Bill Bailey video: <https://inthedrink.org.uk/bill-bailey-shares-his-thoughts-about-in-the-drink/>

Sky Sports News Interview w/ Paul Hyman (*In the Drink*): <https://inthedrink.org.uk/in-the-drink-features-on-sky-news/>

Time Out feature on *In the Drink* co-founder, Paul Hyman: <https://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/meet-the-londoners-making-our-city-a-better-place>

Time Out feature on Active360/*In the Drink*: <https://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/five-great-places-to-support-small-business-saturday-in-london>

Buy Me Once Blog: <https://uk.buymeonce.com/blogs/articles-tips/love-beer-hate-plastic-introducing-the-in-the-drink-scheme>

River Thames Society, Thames Guardian print feature

#### Feedback to us

Your feedback is important to us. We would be grateful for any comments on (or recommendations for future) Litter Innovation Fund management and materials: