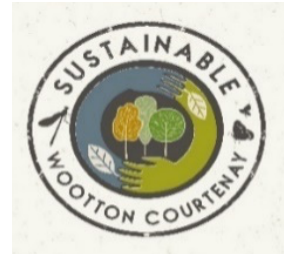


# SUSTAINABLE WOOTTON COURTENAY

## Newsletter No 10, March 2024



**The Big Plastic Count is the UK's biggest investigation into household plastic waste.**

Sign up at [thebigplasticcount.com/sign-up](https://thebigplasticcount.com/sign-up)

1. You can take part as a household or as a school. Just enter a few details and you'll be sent a free counting pack that gives you everything you need to take part, including a tally sheet that you can stick on your fridge or somewhere the whole household can see.

2. **Get counting. Every day from 11–17 March 2024**, count the plastic items you throw away. There are some items you don't need to count – a list is provided. How you count is up to you: some people tick items off as they go, and some people put it all to one side to count at the end of the week. Remember, if you miss a day or two, don't panic! Just keep counting. When you input your results, allowances will be made.

3. **Submit your results by 31st March.** It's easy to do, just head to [thebigplasticcount.com/submit](https://thebigplasticcount.com/submit)

4. **Get your footprint.** Once you've submitted your results, we'll send you your personalised plastic footprint. If you took part in 2022, you'll also be able to compare your footprint year on year. Once all the data is in, data analysts will use it to calculate the national picture too.



**Help us get the government to take action.** We'll use the evidence to show the government why it's so important they take strong action to end the plastic problem for good.

### What could we learn?

**In 2022, The Big Plastic Count uncovered the shocking truth that only 12% of our plastic waste is likely to be recycled.** And almost half (46%) of our plastic waste is incinerated. Burning plastic releases tonnes of climate-wrecking emissions, as well as pollutants and toxins which harm those living nearby.

This year, we hope to build even more evidence about how much excess plastic the UK uses and what happens to it. The plastics crisis is still with us. But with your help, hopefully not for much longer.



## THE FUNNIEST RED NOSES EVER



The Noses can now be fully recycled at home.

The 2024 Red Noses are plastic free, and are made from 70% bagasse and 30% wood pulp, which is moulded together with trace amounts of a food-safe colour dye. The characters are then printed with a UV printer, so there's also a trace amount of printer ink on the Red Nose. All the material is plant-based, and therefore fully recyclable.



WWW.MORALFIBRES.CO.UK



## The Teabags That Are Plastic Free (And Those That Contain Plastic)



Here is the current situation plastic-free tea bag situation right now in the UK (updated May 2023), with notes on how to dispose of each brand's teabags, and if the brand offers loose-leaf tea.

### Clipper: Place in your food waste bin | String and tag teabags home compostable

Back in 2017 people were most shocked by the fact that [Clipper's](#) unbleached organic teabags contained plastic. Thanks to consumer demand, Clipper took action, and switched its pillow teabags to a plant-based PLA several years ago, sourced from non-GM plant material.

### Co-Op Own Brand 99: Place in your food waste bin

Thanks to consumer pressure, The Co-Op switched its own-brand [Fairtrade 99](#) tea over to PLA teabags in 2018.

## **PG Tips: Place in your food waste bin | Loose leaf tea selection available**

Unilever-owned [PG Tips](#) made the switch to PLA a couple of years ago thanks to consumer pressure. Now its entire range can be industrially composted via your food waste bin.

## **Pukka: Home compostable or can go in your food waste bin**

Unilever-owned [Pukka](#) makes organic and fairly sourced herbal teas. Its string and tag teabags have always been plastic and PLA-free. However, each individual bag used to come wrapped in an unrecyclable plastic-lined envelope. The good news is that Pukka now uses widely recyclable envelopes.

## **Roqberry: Place in your food waste bin**

[Roqberry's](#) flavourful fruit and herbal infusions come in PLA plastic-based pyramids. From banana-flavoured tea to blueberry, these unique tea blends tread lightly on the planet.

## **Sainsbury's: Place in your food waste bin | Loose leaf tea selection available**

I added Sainsbury's to this plastic-free teabag list in August 2021. After news that [from summer 2021 Sainsbury's own-brand teabags will be plastic-free](#), as part of its ongoing commitment to halve plastic packaging by 2025, this finally rolled out in-store in August 2021. The new tea bags are made from PLA and are industrially compostable. What I also like is that the packaging is completely plastic-free too.

## **Teapigs: Place in your food waste bin**

Sustainable tea stalwarts [Teapigs](#) have always made teabags without fossil fuel-based plastic – its tasty tea pyramids have always been PLA-based. However, Teapigs didn't stop there. A few years ago the brand also switched the plastic inner bag to a home compostable bag. Top plastic-free marks!

## **Yorkshire Tea: Place in your food waste bin | Loose leaf tea selection available**

[Yorkshire Tea](#) – including regular Yorkshire Tea, Yorkshire Gold, Yorkshire Tea Decaf and Yorkshire Tea for Hard Water – have, since September 2021, been manufactured from PLA. Yorkshire Tea also says *"All our products are now carbon neutral, and what we want next is for all our packaging to be "circular" – which means made from renewable, plant-based or recycled materials, and reusable, recyclable or compostable after use"*.

# **TEA BAGS/PACKAGING THAT STILL CONTAIN PLASTIC**

**As of May 2023, many teabags from big-name brands still contain plastic. These include the following brands.**

### **Lidl**

Lidl's pyramid teabags are made from PLA, making them industrially compostable. However, the rest of its teabags are sealed using polypropylene. I can't find any details to say that they looking to switch to more sustainable options, which is a disappointing step by Lidl.

### **Marks & Spencer**

Marks & Spencer's non-herbal range of tea bags still contains plastic.

In January 2021 Marks & Spencer told me over Twitter that *"we changed our pyramid herbal teabags to a plant-based material at the end of 2019. These can be disposed of in food waste bins collected by local councils. We're continuing to explore more sustainable options for our other tea bag ranges in the future"*. This non-committal action on plastic in the rest of their range of teabags is in contrast to an [M&S press release issued in 2018](#). Here, Marks & Spencer said they were taking a *"razor-sharp look at how we use plastics"* and that *"we're taking plastics out of all 450 million teabags we sell"*. It's disappointing that four years later that 'razor-sharp look' translates to a woolly *'we're continuing to explore... in the future'*.

## Morrisons

I haven't been able to find any information which suggests that Morrisons' own-brand teabags are plastic-free. This means that for now, Morrisons is on the list of teabags that do contain plastic, until I hear otherwise.

## Tesco

Similar to Morrisons, there is no information to suggest that Tesco's own-brand teabags are plastic-free. I will press Tesco for an update.

## Tetley

Tetley is currently in the process of switching from plastic heat-sealed teabags. The [brand says](#) *"With 9 million (teabags) to convert, we can't change all of our bags at once, but we're starting with our big sellers of lovely Tetley Original 120s and 240s".* Once all of Tetley's teabags are plastic-free I'll move them out of this category.

## Twinings

I've put Twinings in the plastic category, rather than the plastic-free category because I consider them a work in progress. I tweeted Twinings to ask about the plastic in their tea in January 2021 and they told me *"More than two-thirds of our products are loose-leaf or made using plant-based teabags & we're working on switching the rest of our bags to a plant-based design. This will be completed in the next 6 months".*

Since then, Twinings has moved the goalposts. Twinings [now says](#) *"By 2025, we will ensure that, in all our markets, our consumer packaging is reusable or recyclable and our tea bags are compostable".*

## Waitrose

It's a bit of a mixed bag at Waitrose. So far it appears its own brand of caffeinated tea bags is made from PLA, so can be disposed of in your food waste bin. However, it appears its own brand decaf tea range is not currently plastic-free.

## To Conclude The Plastic-Free Teabag Conversation

Many teabag manufacturers have made the switch to more planet-friendly teabags. However, it's clear that some of the big players, like Twinings, Waitrose, M&S, Morrisons, and Lidl still have some way to go before all of the big teabag brands are plastic-free. If your tea manufacturer of choice isn't mentioned here, then do email or tweet them to ask about their teabags.

If your favourite is not named then [www.moralfibres.co.uk](http://www.moralfibres.co.uk) has information on many other brands of tea bags – check it out.



## Stand Out Socks

Stand Out Socks, co-founded by Ross, an inspiring individual with Down Syndrome. Our socks are more than just fashionable accessories; they are the catalysts for meaningful conversations about disability inclusion and serve as a beacon of awareness for Down Syndrome.

But our mission goes even further. When you buy a pair of Stand Out Socks, you're not just getting exceptional quality; you're also directly contributing to the creation of employment opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities. Your purchase empowers these remarkable individuals to achieve financial independence, providing them with the opportunities they truly deserve. [Check out the range: standoutsocks.co.uk](http://standoutsocks.co.uk)