



Phasing out disposables: Shul guide 2023

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Why should we stop using disposables?



UK Government will ban the sale of single use plastics from the 1st October 2023

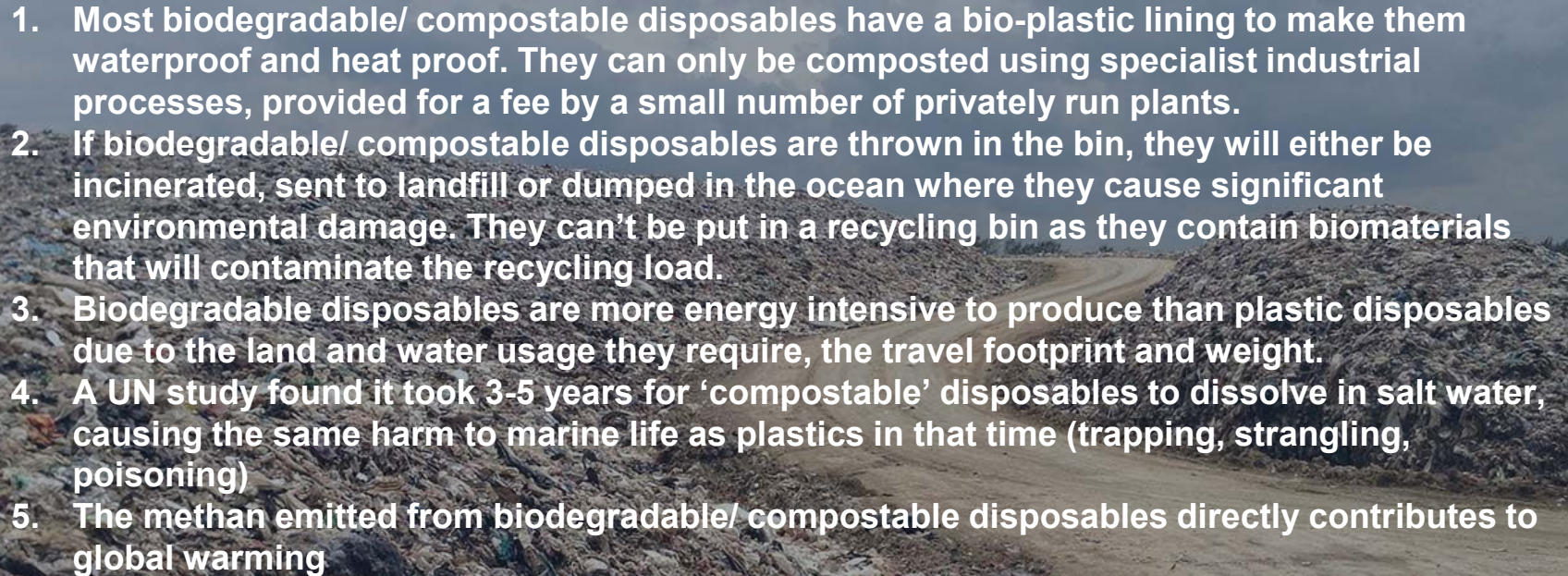
Shuls need to start preparing now to make the transition away from plastics and ideally other disposables

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the UK Government's guidance page. The URL in the address bar is www.gov.uk/guidance/single-use-plastics-ban-plates-bowls-trays-containers-cutlery-and-balloon-sticks#:~:text=Guidance,Single-use%20plastics%20ban%3A%20plates%2C%20bowls%2C%20trays%2C,use%20plastic%20items%20in%20England. The page header includes the GOV.UK logo and navigation links for Home, Environment, Waste and recycling, and Waste and environmental impact. The main heading is "Guidance" followed by the title "Single-use plastics ban: plates, bowls, trays, containers, cutlery and balloon sticks". Below the title, the text states: "From 1 October 2023 businesses must no longer supply, sell or offer certain single-use plastic items in England." The source is cited as "From: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs" and the publication date is "Published 23 May 2023". A button at the bottom of the page says "Get emails about this page". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the system tray with the date "Jun 28" and time "1:45".

The ban will include single-use plastic plates, trays, bowls, cutlery, balloon sticks, and certain types of polystyrene cups and food containers.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/single-use-plastics-ban-plates-bowls-trays-containers-cutlery-and-balloon-sticks#:~:text=Guidance,Single-use%20plastics%20ban%3A%20plates%2C%20bowls%2C%20trays%2C,use%20plastic%20items%20in%20England.>

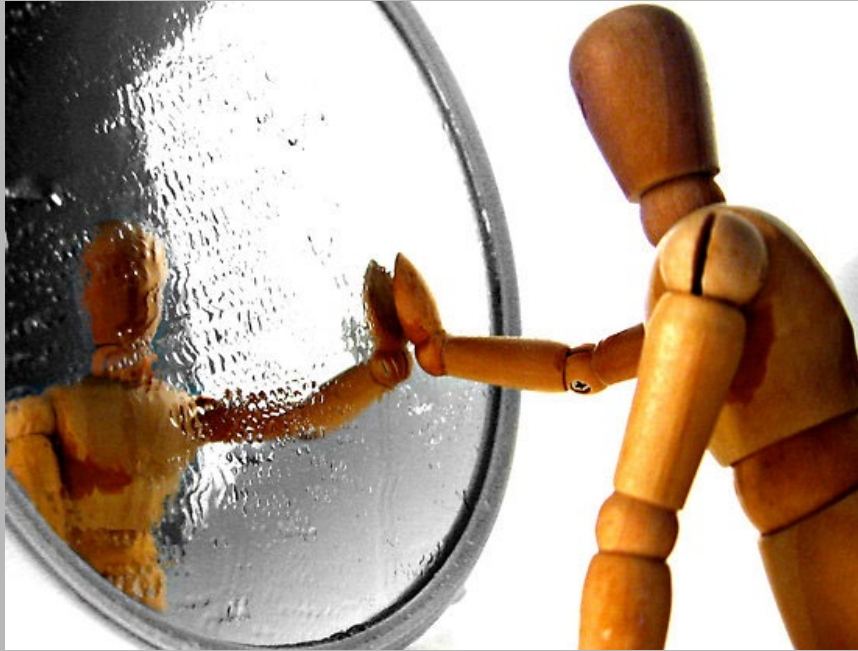
What's the problem with 'biodegradable' disposables ?

1. Most biodegradable/ compostable disposables have a bio-plastic lining to make them waterproof and heat proof. They can only be composted using specialist industrial processes, provided for a fee by a small number of privately run plants.
 2. If biodegradable/ compostable disposables are thrown in the bin, they will either be incinerated, sent to landfill or dumped in the ocean where they cause significant environmental damage. They can't be put in a recycling bin as they contain biomaterials that will contaminate the recycling load.
 3. Biodegradable disposables are more energy intensive to produce than plastic disposables due to the land and water usage they require, the travel footprint and weight.
 4. A UN study found it took 3-5 years for 'compostable' disposables to dissolve in salt water, causing the same harm to marine life as plastics in that time (trapping, strangling, poisoning)
 5. The methan emitted from biodegradable/ compostable disposables directly contributes to global warming
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- A photograph of a large, sprawling landfill or waste dump. The foreground and middle ground are filled with a chaotic pile of discarded waste, including plastic bottles, paper, and other debris. A dirt road or path winds through the waste in the background. The sky is overcast and grey.

A compostable bag after 3 years in the ocean ,
still able to hold a bag full of shopping



You are your kiddush



Ultimately, this is not just about saving a turtle or money; it's about the soul of your community.

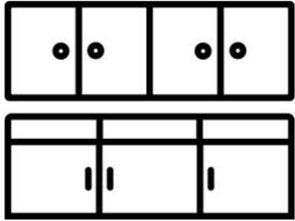
You are your kiddush - and how you conduct it speaks volumes about the values and priorities of a community.

Going disposable free can be one the most impactful things shuls can do to engage existing members and attract new ones.

It will change how your community sees itself and how others see you.

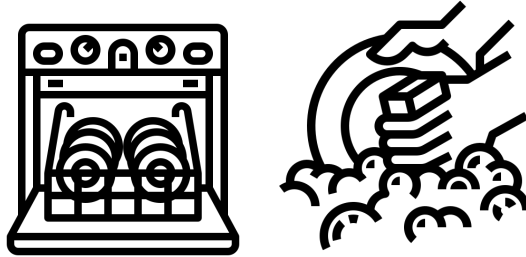
3 essentials to go disposable free

1. Storage space:



Reorganise existing space to maximise space. You may need to buy additional units, or free-standing storage units to give you more room

2. Washing facility:



A dishwasher or sink is essential to go completely disposables free. However even without these facilities a shul can significantly reduce the amount of disposables used by choosing smart finger food options

3. Accept you may need to pay staff



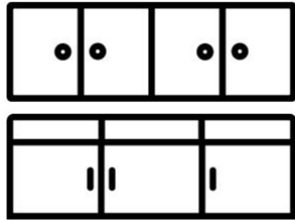
For a medium size shul, you will need 1 person for approx 2 hrs to wash up and put away a kiddush for approx. 200 people. Staff cost is typically £12 per hr. For a £500 kiddush works of 5% of the cost. This cost is often offset against the cost of buying disposables

10 steps to going disposables free at a shul:

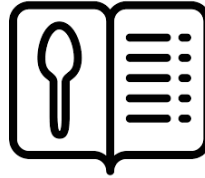
1. Appoint lead, plan with admin and Rabbinic team



2. Make space



3. Make smart, finger food kiddush menu options



4. Agree washing-up/ dishwashing arrangement with caretaker/ cleaning staff



5. Install equipment if needed (dishwasher, drying racks etc)



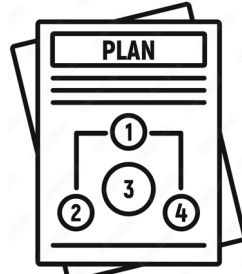
6. Donate disposables to <https://foodbankaid.org.uk/>



7. Buy permanent ware



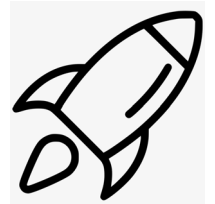
8. Agree launch plan



9. Communicate to members



10. Launch



Re-imagining your kiddush: Shul & Caterers view



Modern kiddush trends:

- One good thing instead of lots of little noshy bits (e.g. smoked salmon bar/ cupcakes etc)
- Station with individual portions served
- Sit down or outside
- No disposables
- Paid staff/caterer instead of volunteer rota

Example menus:

- **Classic:** fish balls, herring, pasties, biscuits, fruit, crisps - requires toothpicks and napkins only
- **Smoked salmon bar:** fresh smoked salmon sandwich served on rye bread with trimmings - requires 1 napkin per person- accompany with drinks bar
- **Croissant & Coffee:** Croissants/pastries delivered by bakery in paper boxes. Served either as they are in boxes or put on platters. Tea and coffee station. Water in jugs. Requires one tea cup and napkin per person
- **Veggie cholent and kugel bar:** A serving of hot kugel and cholent. Requires one bowl and spoon per person
- **Strawberries and cream with Pimms bar:** glass cup or small bowl with fresh strawberries and poured cream on top. Pimms bar + non alcoholic options
- **Chickpea and vegetable tagine with couscous:** Vegan, nutritious and delicious, served in one bowl with spoon

Top tips:

1. Kiddush glasses/tots and drinking glasses are the only 'essential' crockery items at a kiddush. Recommend Ikea POAL £2 for 6 strong stable glasses; <https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/p/pokal-snaps-glass-clear-glass-90091996/>

Nisbit toughened glass tumblers

Ikea 365+ tumblers £5 or 6

1. Ikea's Plastic non-disposable glasses for kids kiddush - use for grape juice and putting food into; <https://www.ikea.com/gb/en/p/kalas-mug-mixed-colours-00461379/>
2. Ask your suppliers to stop using plastic packaging - bakeries / caterers can accommodate this using cardboard boxes for bakeware and aluminium for food
3. Better to do something than nothing - pick one area like kiddush tots/glasses to start with if you can't go completely disposables free
4. 'Compostable' and bamboo disposables have a high carbon footprint and can't be recycled. Most compostables have to go to an industrial plant to be composted. If you throw them in the bin they go to landfill or the ocean where they cause as much significant environmental damage. Use plain paper ware instead
5. Glassware can be used for milky and meaty if space is tight
6. Use the US 'Crockery Gamach' for ad hoc event needs
7. Hire kosher crockery for one-off large events- no washing up!
8. Be open to change, your kiddush may now look different, the logistics will change but this is an essential step to reducing pollution, carbon emissions and wildlife loss.