

Northern Stage

Phasing out single-use plastic cups

At a glance

Location

Newcastle upon Tyne

Tags

Single-use plastic
Audience education
Procurement

Overview

Northern Stage have begun the process of phasing out single-use plastic cups and replacing them with multi-use ones. Here **Michael Bell**, the Facilities and Environmental Sustainability Officer, answers some questions on how it's going.



Could you tell us a little bit of background to your decision to make a sustainable change?

Of course, the Theatre Green Book played a part in inspiring us to make the change, but what drove me to action was going to a Sunderland football match and seeing the initiative that they had in place with multi use cups. After this I went to work the following Monday and we immediately took action to start ordering multi-use cups and phasing out single-use plastics.

What process did you go through to decide the best option/supplier?

We wanted to choose a supplier which was local to us, rather than using some of the larger commercial suppliers. Fortunately, we have a relationship with Innerglass who are based in Peterlee and despite their product being slightly more expensive we decided this would back up the message we are trying to send by using multi-use cups in the first place.

What has been the biggest challenge about making the change/s?

The biggest challenge has been getting customers to return the reuseable glasses, as despite signage and information given at point of sale, we still lose quite a few during shows etc. It's also a challenge during very busy and sold out shows as it requires staff to either stay back longer or leave glass washing until the next day. Therefore, we often tend to switch to the single-use for convenience for now as we still have quite a few boxes to get through. (Once these have run out the aim is to not reorder any and continue entirely with multi-use.)

What has been any positive outcomes?

The positive outcomes have been the reactions by audience and customers. One of our customers who is a student at the university asked me if I could be part of some research survey they were conducting, as they were impressed and hadn't seen them in many other venues. Customers have also mentioned the multi-use plastics on feedback forms. Finally, we have slightly reduced the number of orders/deliveries for plastic, as we aren't solely ordering single-use anymore.

Do you have any advice for organisations looking to make similar steps?

Plan for customers throwing away multi-use cups and maybe consider having a separate bin for multi-use cups only, so they can be collected and reused.

Content provided by

Michael Bell

Facilities and Environmental Sustainability