

# A PLASTIC PLANET

## A PLASTIC PLANET CORE BELIEFS

### 1. THE POWER OF SIMPLE

APP's believes in plain speaking. It's either plastic, or it's not plastic. Somehow plastic has become a very complicated issue and it suits those that don't want change to complicate it even further. Our goal is to bring a straight-talking clarity to the world of plastic; using language that everyone relates to. It is exciting that others are adopting this approach too – Iceland Stores for example. Bravo for plain English!

### 2. SINGLE-MINDED FOCUS: FOOD AND DRINK

Of all the plastic made in the world in 2015, approximately 40% was used for packaging and nearly half of this for food and drink. We only need to open our fridges to see our involuntary, and total addiction to plastic. APP is only focused on plastics used for food and drink packaging which APP believes is the wrong use of this miracle material. APP is not focused on plastics that are used in any other sector including health, aviation, and communications where it saves lives every day and makes modern life possible.

### 3. WE MUST NOT DEMONISE PLASTIC

Some decades ago, we invented a wondrous material. With qualities making it flexible or rigid, strong or delicate, it became the modern material made from oil or even sugar cane. We called it PLASTIC. And it was virtually indestructible in any environment – land or sea – lasting for centuries. But then we started to use this miracle material for one-time uses. We packaged perishable food in it and made drinks bottles and everyday items from it. Once used, we simply threw it away. Without knowing that it would exist forever. We just didn't know what we were doing. But now we do. We have misused this amazing plastic material. We have disrespected it and thrown it into our gutters, our fields and our oceans. We need to put plastic back on its rightful pedestal; give it the value it deserves and learn our lessons. There will always be a need for plastic – medical science, aviation, technology, car industries – where plastic can more easily be reclaimed and kept within a closed recycling loop. Single use, especially for food and drink, is not defensible.

### 4. WE REPRESENT THE PUBLIC

Our campaigns are simply about giving the public choice. Right now we have no choice but to buy our supermarket groceries wrapped in plastic. In an age when we have a plethora of choice for everything – fat-free, gluten-free, dairy-free, meat-free – we would like the choice to buy plastic-free.

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## 5. NO BLAME, NO GUILT

We are all plastic addicts. We have all created this plastic pollution disaster together. This is not a time for finger pointing. We have sleepwalked into this self-made nightmare and we now need to fast-track out of it. Together. We call for collaboration between all supermarkets, brands and industry. Let us not just consider competitive advantage but open source all new solutions so we can work together to accelerate the pace of essential change.

## 6. RECYCLING IS NOT WORKING

At our current rates, recycling does not reduce plastic pollution and we cannot recycle our way out of the problem. Recycling may even provide false comfort: 'It's OK to buy plastic at our current rates because it's recycled'. Even if every household recycled and state-of-the-art recycling systems existed (neither is true) recycling simply cannot keep up with the sheer volume that is produced, bought, and thrown away every day. Instead of increasing recycling rates, APP focus is on the use of highly recycled materials such as glass, card and metal and compostable biomaterials.

## 7. THERE SHOULD BE NO SUCH THING AS WASTE

Right now we start the manufacturing process with 'resource management'; then we make something, use it, and then dispose of it through different systems of waste management including recycling, landfill, incineration and sometimes, industrial composting. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could change our attitude to waste management, even change the name to RESOURCE MANAGEMENT? A better circle would be: Source, Manufacture, Use .. and back to Source again. This is why we are so keen that the UK explore the use of compostable biomaterials that return something valuable back to Nature, rather than something harmful like conventional plastic. It will require a seismic shift and substantial investment at Government level. But right now, the UK spend on 'waste management' is half per capita that spent in other European countries. We are dealing with waste on the cheap. And it is coming back to haunt us.

## 8. THE SOIL-TO-SOIL CYCLE

In 2060 it is predicted that there will be insufficient nutrients in our topsoil to grow our crops. Wouldn't it be a positive revolution to use packaging that can be composted instead of landfilled to regenerate our depleted soils and sustain our farming? We think so.

## 9. EVERYONE HAS A RIGHT TO PLASTIC-FREE – IT IS NOT A LUXURY

We believe the Plastic Free food is not a luxury item. We believe it must be universally accessible for everyone's budget and pocket.

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## **10. TAXING PLASTIC IS A RED HERRING. CARROT LEGISLATION IS A GAME CHANGER**

APP does not believe in taxing plastic packaging as the sole solution to wean us off conventional plastic. Taxing tobacco and alcohol companies did not reduce smoking or drinking; it did however provide the government with a sizeable and dependable revenue stream that is difficult to walk away from. Taxing companies using plastic packing will be even less effective because plastic is so cheap and customers will absorb the costs through higher food prices.

Instead, APP believes a better way is to reward companies that do not use plastic packaging through tax breaks: The carrot, not the stick. Not only do positive incentives act as powerful levers for change, they can also inspire more thoughtful change. If a tax on the manufacturers and brands using plastic must be introduced, let it be visible and invested into a 21st century waste management system rather than disappear into the Treasury coffers.