

Vegware solve the problem of your coffee cups

Vegware the Edinburgh based compostable packaging manufacturer has begun a composting collection service for all the products it sells in the capital.



The initiative is called 'Close the Loop' and with this the company now offers composting collections to businesses across Edinburgh and Scotland's Central Belt, taking used Vegware packaging and food waste for industrial composting into high-grade horticultural compost.

Recent debate has encouraged cafés and foodservice businesses to improve cup recycling. This compostable solution by Edinburgh-based Vegware will enable foodservices to recycle all takeaway packaging, not just cups.

Eilidh Brunton, Vegware's group recycling consultant, explained: "There are now some initiatives to separate out and recycle plastic-lined paper cups. That is a good start, but what about the lid, tea bag, stirrer, spoon and sandwich box? In reality, used takeaway packaging is a mix of materials contaminated with food, and goes to incineration or landfill.

"Our approach is simple: if it's all made from plants, not plastic, and can be composted together with food waste, then there's no sorting. All used takeaway items go together with food waste, and can be processed at industrial composting facilities around the UK in under 12 weeks. Catering waste can create high-grade horticultural compost, to feed the next generation of plants."

Close the Loop was in action at the recent Edinburgh Coffee

Festival at the Corn Exchange. Vegware's Environmental team provided consultancy, signage and training, and all traders used compostable cups, lids and assorted disposables.

Edinburgh Coffee Festival organiser Martin Dare, said: "We understand the challenges of recycling coffee cups, but it's only through working with Vegware that we have found a solution to allow Edinburgh Coffee Festival to truly go zero waste. Cups are talked about the most, but making everything compostable keeps recycling simple. The measures we're taking at the Festival are designed to demonstrate to a wider audience what compostables can achieve."

Waste from the Central Belt is composted at GP Green Recycling, near Glasgow. Initial Close the Loop clients include the Glasgow Science Centre and independent Edinburgh cafes Union of Genius and Pumpkin Brown. Close the Loop is a disruptive model, a waste service which is flexible and competitively priced. Clients choose any collection day and have no contract ties.

The service was given cross-party support at The Scottish Parliament with a Parliamentary Motion lodged by Gordon Lindhurst MP. Vegware also won Supplier of the Year at the 2017 Food Made Good Awards for their Close the Loop solution, and the company has been shortlisted in the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Awards 2018.