

# 'Cup for life' scheme – saying goodbye to disposable cups

## introduction

SUEZ recycling and recovery UK identified that disposable coffee and tea cups made up a large proportion of the waste produced at the head office of a leading energy and petrochemical company, which resulted in frequent waste collections.

By removing this substantial waste stream, we helped to reduce their costs.

## the challenge

To replace disposable vending machine cups with a reusable alternative.

In total, an estimated 300,000 disposable cups were used every year at the company's head office, which led to substantial purchase costs and a large waste stream. The use of disposable cups had a significant environmental impact associated with delivery, collection, transportation and disposal.

The new scheme required a behaviour change and relied on employees adopting the new process. SUEZ and the customer aimed to reduce single-use coffee cups, which generated a substantial amount of waste, resulting in high disposal costs.

## the solution

The old disposable cups were replaced by reusable cups with lids. The reusable cups are made from polypropylene (a very durable material), and were designed for frequent use.

The 'cup for life' scheme was introduced to 1,300 employees. As an incentive for participation, employees receive a 50% discount on the usual price of hot drinks in the office when they use their 'Cup for life'.

Over the course of a few weeks the disposable cups were phased out and each employee received their own reusable cup.



# The Engineer series case study

## the results

Improved bottom line, reduced environmental impact.

The scheme received a very positive response from all employees.

Our customer saved approximately £8,400 in the first year (including the initial purchase costs of the reusable cups). In future, they will save approximately £9,700 per year.

They have also removed the costs associated with waste collection and disposal, which brings associated benefits to the environment due to reduced emissions.

An added benefit is that the cups can be used outside the office environment, such as in coffee shops and when travelling. Encouraging the use of reusable cups both in the workplace and within the wider community led to increased awareness of waste reduction and positive behavioural change.

This scheme represents the best possible outcome with regards to environmental performance, as the waste is no longer being created in the first place. The model can now be replicated across their other sites around the UK and globally.

