



Case Study: The Hideaway Café, Beecraigs

The Hideaway Cafe opened in March 2017 at Beecraigs Country Park. From the outset, owners Paul & Audrey wanted to provide wholesome and traditional menus from locally sourced produce. Being located in an area of such natural beauty, they were also mindful of the cafe's impact on the local environment and in particular they wanted to minimise the cafes consumption of single use plastic. One year after opening, Paul & Audrey can now say that all takeaway packaging at the cafe is made from compostable material.

The Hideaway Cafe use 100% compostable Vegware products including packaging for take away food; carry out cups and lids for both hot and cold drinks; cutlery; and compostable straws. They offer wooden stirrers and paper bags. Jam is served in small pots and condiment sachets are only given out if asked. There are still some plastic items, but they estimate that these will run out in a few weeks. Tap water is available in jugs for customers to refill their own water bottles. They are soon to start a 10p discount on take away hot drinks to anyone bringing their own cup, and will soon sell Hideaway branded reusable coffee cups.

The switch from single use plastic hasn't been all plain sailing. Costs for compostable items are higher than plastic equivalents but Paul and Audrey have managed to negotiate good discounts through bulk buying with their supplier, Livingston based Instock Disposables. They now estimate that annual costs are about £50 - £60 higher than previously and they have raised prices to cover this (10p on carry out hot drinks and 25p on Slush) which hasn't affected business. Educating customers on how to dispose of compostable packaging is another challenge so Paul will be introducing a Close the Loop collection service shortly whereby coloured bins are placed outside the cafe for food and compostable packaging waste which are then collected by Vegware at £9.50 per collection.

Paul and Audrey are also doing the same in their cafe in The Hideaway Bathgate, and estimate that this will be complete by Summer 2018.