

PLASTIC AND WASTE REDUCTION

Information on Leighton Buzzard shops

Are you tired of putting the bin out for collection every week? Is your bin full of packaging waste?

Plastics are hard to recycle, can mainly only be downcycled, and can only be recycled a few times before ending up in landfill (or in the oceans). Plastics then hang around pretty much forever ([How long does it take a plastic bottle to biodegrade?](#)). They are also made of non renewable oil and potentially leach toxins into your food. We have therefore been trying to reduce not only our landfill waste, but our recyclables too, particularly trying to avoid single use plastics. This has been a journey, changing our buying habits a little at a time, but over the last couple of years we have managed to reduce our landfill waste by over 80% and our recycling by about 50%. This post is about just one of the ways of avoiding packaging waste, by trying to avoid acquiring it in the first place, and focuses on the places that, after a change in my shopping habits, I find this easy to do for grocery and household items in my home town of Leighton Buzzard. If you know of other local shops that should be included please do let me know.

Harris and Sons Fruit and Veg – on the South side of the High Street opposite Dillamores Furnishers on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Happy to place fruit and veg directly into your own bags with no individual plastic or papers bags; see picture

Other market traders are also often happy to sell into your own containers – just ask nicely at the start of your purchase. It feels strange at first but you soon get used to it, and so do the traders. I have done this several times at the **olive stall** at the top of the High Street ;

Sadiya at the **Delisha** samosa stall, a cake stall and at the other fruit and veg stall all will put their goods into your own containers. Sadiya doesn't use plastic containers.

The **fish van** indicated he would be happy to do this too.

Mimic Gifts sells a range of vegan friendly bath products free from SLS and palm oil – many products can already be bought loose or in card, with a discount if you bring back the box to refill, and the stallholder is working hard to remove or reduce plastic packaging and source alternatives for other products.

The farmers market and craft markets are also a good place to ask. The farmerts markets is the third Saturday of every month and the Craft market is the fourth Saturday. Check the [market website](#) . Morgan Pell Meats, whose farm South beds FoE have visited and has

lovely tall hedges and wildflower areas, is part of the Farmers market and definitely allows you to use your own container. Janet on the farmers market does refills of the Oil seed rape bottles and accepts your empty jam jars. **Bucks Star Brewery** visits the farmers each month and take their glass eco-growlers back and give you a full one at a discount, whilst the **Leighton Buzzard Brewing Company** sells refillable growlers which you can refill at the brewery on Grovebury Road. The **Honey Man** asks you to return your empty jar for a discount off the next one.

House of Coffee – Peacock Mews. This small coffee roasting shop is happy to grind coffee as required into your own container. I began by taking in a plastic lunch box but having since acquired lots of empty large Dowe Egberts coffee jars from a local sharing site I use one of those, carefully wrapped in a tea towel to protect it in transit. We then store the jar in the freezer to keep the coffee fresh. Fair trade options are usually available. A small discount is now offered to customers refilling their coffee bags or using their own containers. Loose tea is also available.

Selections – High Street A variety of hardware items from replacement broom heads to individual screws. They also sell replacement gas canisters for SodaStream (as does Argos) which has replaced the plastic bottles of fizzy water we used to buy every week, and saved us money.

Natures Harvest – North Street Sells unpackaged soap and refills for Recover laundry, conditioner and washing up liquid. Also stocks bamboo toothbrushes, Ecoleaf toilet roll in compostable packaging and lots of other eco friendly products. Although many of the food items are currently in plastic, the owner is actively investigating alternatives.

Oliver Adams Bakers- Market Square Bread, cakes etc either in paper bags or into your own bag/container.

The Co-Op – Waterdell off Brooklands Drive has a daily delivery of Italian bread which can be bought loose.

Strattons Butchers – Market Square . If you eat meat ask Strattons to sell it you without any single use plastic. I ask them to weigh it on the waxed paper sheets they use and then transfer in to my own container, which they are happy to do.

Model Farm – Hockliffe Road If you are passing (just out of town past the garden centre) this is a great place to buy free range eggs. We return the boxes for reuse when we next visit.

Pecks Farm – Towards Hockliffe – we have our milk delivered in returnable glass bottles by Pecks Farm. It does cost more so is one of our more recent changes, but we have offset the additional cost by savings made elsewhere in our waste reduction journey. The farm also sells

a range of local produce, oil and vinegar refills and loose fruit and veg, including organic options, (thanks to Pecks Farm for supplying the photo below).

Clipstone Dairy – Clipstone – has a milk vending machine. I haven't used it yet but understand they will sell you a bottle you can reuse but are also quite happy for you to bring along your own bottle to fill.

The Little Buzzard Bakery on North Street – very happy for you to use your own bag for their freshly baked goods – but get there early as they often sell out!

And if you need a coffee to take away while you are out and about, both **Costa** and **Espresso Head** offer a discount if you bring a reuseable mug. If you do end up with a takeaway coffee cup from anywhere, did you know that you can take them into Costa who will send them off to one of the 2 places in the UK that are able to recycle takeaway cups? The takeaway cups from espresso head can be composted.

Card Factory- sell degradable confetti;

Tesco- planning to reduce but need lobbying ;

Waitrose- stopped using single use plastic bags in 2018; You can take your own container to the meat and fish counter.

Aldi- no information

Morrisons- will sell meat straight into your own containers;

Sainsbury- no information;

To re-visit as they are interested in doing something

- Wool shop in Peacock Mews
- Cafe in Peacock Mews
- Breast Cancer shop
- Age UK shop
- Party Shop- sell paper straws now, but wrapped in plastic bag!

Pubs and other cafes