

Network Rail Introduces Coffee Cup Recycling: Passengers Encouraged to “Sip, Save and Recycle”



Coffee loving commuters are being encouraged to “Sip, Save and Recycle” their cups in Britain’s biggest and busiest stations, as Network Rail rolls out the first of their new coffee cup recycling bins at King’s Cross, Leeds, London Bridge, Waterloo, Liverpool Street, Charing Cross and Cannon Street.

As passenger numbers slowly increase and with 60% of station retailers now open, those travelling by train or visiting the stations can make use of the bright orange bins to recycle any paper coffee cups purchased during their journey. Recycled cups are turned into upcycled reusable cups and other products including tissue and packaging, reducing waste and encouraging a circular economy.

Partnering with environmental charity Hubbub and working closely with waste provider, Interserve, Network Rail will be installing specially designed bins at all managed stations - including Birmingham New Street, Bristol Temple Meads, Edinburgh Waverley, Manchester Piccadilly and 11 London stations - by the end of October.

The rollout comes as a new YouGov study commissioned by Network Rail reveals that consumers want to recycle cups but often do not know how:

- 58% use either a waste bin or general recycling bin to recycle cups despite these systems being unable to manage paper cups; almost a quarter (23%) of those who use a general recycling bin did not realise that coffee or paper cups should be recycled in specific bins.
- Only 3 in 10 adults (30%) who purchase a cup of coffee while travelling reported that they use a bin specifically designed for recycling coffee cups once they have finished with it.
- Of those who don’t tend to recycle paper cups, just over half (52%) say it’s because there isn’t anywhere available for them to do so throughout their journey, while 21% feel that public recycling facilities are inadequate.

The initiative follows Network Rail's launch of their new sustainability strategy, which includes ambitions to make stations greener.

Jo Lewington, Chief Environment and Sustainability Officer at Network Rail, said: "By installing accessible, easy-to-use cup recycling bins across our managed station network this year, we're helping our passengers to reduce their waste with a simple message – "Sip, Save and Recycle". We believe the initiative will go a long way to supporting the circular economy and making our stations more sustainable."

Gavin Ellis, Director and Co-Founder of Hubbub, added: "We're delighted to partner with Network Rail on the introduction of these new cup recycling points. Cups can be easily recycled but, because they have a plastic lining that stops hot drinks from leaking, they need to be collected separately from other recycling. There is now plenty of capacity to recycle cups in the UK; what is needed is more infrastructure to collect the cups in high footfall places, so train stations are the ideal location. Our support for this initiative was made possible with funding from the Starbucks 5p cup charge, which Hubbub uses to make it easier and simpler for the public to recycle the cups they use, as well as promoting the use of reusable cups."