



CASE STUDY: DYNAMIC EARTH

EMBRACING COSMIC COMPOSTING

OVERVIEW

Dynamic Earth is a 5-star visitor attraction in Scotland's capital – situated at the heart of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site. It opened in 1999 to tell the story of planet Earth from its inner workings and species evolution to modern times and future challenges.

They use compostable Vegware packaging in their Food Chain Café, staff canteen and corporate events to achieve their sustainability goals. Using these plant-based disposables contributed to securing their gold award status for Green Tourism.



TRAVEL BACK IN TIME

In September 2017, the Food Chain Café contacted Vegware to switch to eco-friendly catering disposables. Over 200,000 visitors come through their doors annually, so stepping away from conventional foodservice packaging was key to lower their impact on the planet.



We started using Vegware's plant-based white hot cups but, as our relationship grew and we learnt about the option to compost, we brought in their products across our food range.



**SUSAN PATON, CAFE MANAGER,
DYNAMIC EARTH'S FOOD CHAIN CAFÉ**

FIT INTO THE FOOD CHAIN

The Food Chain Café uses Vegware custom print double wall hot cups, to match the permanent volcano, rainforest and space exhibits. The 8oz space cups arrived for the 50th anniversary of the moon landing and the opening day of their new Mission Earth exhibit celebrating this historic milestone.

Pleased with the quality and design, they ordered sustainable straw and cold cups alternatives to meet their plastic-free objectives.



I was keen on Vegware from the start. The plant-based products were presented as a practical solution: the wide and versatile product range could support Dynamic Earth for the long-term. It has also been a delight to support a fellow Edinburgh, UK-based company.



THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

Close the Loop is Vegware's own composting collection service for trade waste, helping clients join the circular economy. The Food Chain Café staff were keen to start composting their used disposables.

The first step was to switch all disposables to compostables: to simplify recycling and minimise waste contamination. Vegware and its distributor partner Alliance conducted a detailed product match against existing disposables and free samples helped the catering crew select the right packaging for their award-winning "Taste Our Best" menu.



Vegware were prompt and helpful, and the process to adopt a new waste system was a smooth transition. We're delighted to have had no contamination complaints from the composting facility.



The centre uses 80L biobags in their internal bins, which are then carried to on-site outdoor bins. All bins are consistently labelled to indicate the food waste and compostables bins – making the new system clear for catering and facilities staff.

Within their first 5 months, Dynamic Earth recycled **1.38 tonnes** of compostables – the equivalent of over 106,000 8oz double wall cups or the weight of a small hippopotamus – with Vegware’s Close the Loop. In under 12 weeks, nutrient-rich compost is created for Scottish farmers’ fields.



ECO EDUCATION FOR ALL

Staff training and consumer education, using clear visual cues, is a vital part of successful recycling. Within the Food Chain Café dining and point of purchase areas, “We received bespoke bin signage and posters to educate our visitors,” shares Paton.

For Green Week in May 2019, a Vegware Recycling Advisor delivered on-site staff training.

Dynamic Earth’s Learning Officers incorporate their compostables knowledge into the centre’s ‘Plastic Smart’ workshops for kids. “As a centre for education, it’s great to have plant-based coffee cups to show children that we are already making steps to solve plastic pollution,” shares Paton. They also use Vegware’s ‘Bin Detective’ activity sheets to educate young recyclers.

LAVA-LY COOPERATION

Dynamic Earth purchase their disposables through their distributor Alliance. Their Alliance Rep is fully involved with the sustainable switch – helping launch their new bespoke range of hot cups. The prompt assistance with new product requests – always a same-day response – comes with recommendations and costs. And if Alliance don’t currently have a suitable product available, they order it from Vegware.

LEADING THE (MILKY) WAY

In addition to the café’s eco success, Dynamic Earth’s in-house Green Team have implemented other initiatives over the years to encourage in-house sustainability, including a cycle-to-work scheme, use of eco cleaning fluids and participating in the Refill app so that app users know Dynamic Earth provides the public with a free water refill station.

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Vegware products have been the biggest help in reaching our plastic-free goal.

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As an educational hub in Scotland, Dynamic Earth are happy to be leading the way in championing renewable, compostable materials.





5 STEPS TO ZERO WASTE TO REACH THE SUSTAINABLE STARS



1. SWITCH ALL CATERING DISPOSABLES TO COMPOSTABLES

Vegware and its distributor customer, Alliance, worked together to help Dynamic Earth product match all their existing disposables.



2. FIND THE BEST RECYCLING SOLUTION AND LABEL YOUR BINS

“The bin signage has been well-received. Teachers with school groups always leave positive feedback on the bin signage. The clear product images make it easy for younger students to get involved in recycling,” says Elinor Brown, Marketing Assistant, Dynamic Earth.



3. COMMUNICATE YOUR SYSTEM

“We’ve been impressed with the sleek, bespoke materials we’ve received,” shares Brown.



4. TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Vegware’s Environmental team held a staff training day so staff can feel confident sharing product knowledge and the composting process with visitors.

5. MEASURE AND COMMUNICATE

Dynamic Earth actively promote their use of compostable Vegware in-house and on their social media channels.

#ZEROWASTEWEEK STARTS TODAY! DID YOU KNOW THAT ALL OUR FOOD CHAIN CAFE PACKAGING IS COMPOSTABLE AND DESIGNED TO BE RECYCLED WITH FOOD WASTE!? THESE INCREDIBLE PRODUCTS FROM @VEGWARE ARE ALL MADE FROM PLANTS AND WE JUST LOVE THEM!

