



## Plastic statement

As an ethical distributor and wholesaler, Essential actively source from suppliers who use sustainable packaging options at the production stage. We are constantly seeking out solutions to minimise packaging waste in all areas of the supply chain. Since 2018 we have removed the sale of plastic water bottles and have introduced over 100 new plastic-free product lines, from body care to household products and consumables. We pack our



own products in recyclable and compostable packaging where possible, and return the plastic wrapping used to secure palletised deliveries to our warehouse for collection by a specialist recycling facility.

One upshot of the growing public concern around plastic waste is a growing trend toward plastic-free retail. Part of the Essential co-

operative, our retail outlets [Harvest Bath](#) and [Harvest Bristol](#) have offered a popular re-fill section since 1971. Essential offer a variety of products in bulk sizes, and are a supplier of the nation's favourite zero-waste shops, including [Earth Food Love](#), Totnes; [The Clean Kilo](#), Birmingham; [Incredible Bulk](#), Cornwall; and [Zero Green](#), Bristol. Get in touch if you are thinking of opening a new plastic-free shop and we will be happy to help!

Essential is committed to the protection of the environment and to sustainable food systems. Efforts to source eco-friendly, fit for purpose packaging for our own retail packs have been on-going for more than twenty years. In 2018 we started hand-packing flour in paper bags sealed with paper tape – a perfect solution for the commodities that can maintain their quality when packed in paper, but still not suitable for most of our goods since packaging must be strong, tamper-proof and durable enough to outlive the shelf life of the product. As technology advances and demand for sustainable packaging puts pressure on manufacturers to invest in such developments, we hope that we are getting closer to finding a suitable plastic-free and GM-free material to replace our current pre-packs.