

# SLEEPER

HOSPITALITY EXPERIENCE & DESIGN



THE STANDARD – LONDON • DAVID ROCKWELL • SISTER CITY – NEW YORK



Over the past ten years, the world has produced more plastic than during the whole of the last century. Consequently, a staggering eight million tonnes of plastic waste is dumped into our oceans every year, and even more shocking was the recent discovery of microscopic particles falling out of the sky with snow in the Arctic. The facts speak for themselves, and tackling what is undoubtedly a large-scale environmental disaster may seem an impossible task, but there is a glimmer of hope.

Increasing pressure from green-thinking consumers, together with new government regulations, has catalysed the war on plastic, with recent reports shedding positive light on single-use carrier bag sales at UK supermarkets,

and has introduced a new shower-product dispenser system in lieu of providing throwaway shampoo and conditioner bottles.

Speaking in 2018, Michel Miserez, Area Vice President, UK & Ireland, Marriott International, explained: “Our UK hotels used 300,000 straws last year. By removing plastic straws from these properties, we made a small but significant step in reducing the volume of plastic that damages our environment and wildlife.”

Similarly, Minor Hotel Group has adopted a straw-free policy across its Anantara and Avani brands in Asia, with a view to extending the scheme to hotels across Europe, Australasia and the Middle East, while Edition Hotels has launched the Stay Plastic Free initiative,

## War on Plastic

**From plastic straws to the complete eradication of single-use products, the hospitality industry opts for greener alternatives to combat waste.**

which have plunged by 93% in five years thanks to the introduction of a 5p levy. On top of that, high-street chains like Costa Coffee, Wagamama and McDonald’s have removed plastic straws from circulation – though the latter has run into controversy over whether its new paper versions are in fact recyclable – while the British Parliament is also planning to tax plastic packaging that is not made from at least 30% recycled content.

Taking the lead from retailers, the hospitality industry began its crusade towards a greener future by finding alternatives to plastic straws and has since championed fully-fledged movements to phase out single-use products altogether.

Amongst those pledging to take action, Hilton Worldwide has revealed a goal to cut its environmental impact in half by 2030, starting by removing plastic straws and substituting the water bottles used in its conference rooms, while Marriott International expects to eliminate one billion plastic straws each year going forward,

promising to meet this goal fully by the end of this year.

The publishing industry has been forced to rethink its stance on plastic too, with the vast majority of current mailing material ending up in landfill. As part of our own commitment to a greener future, Sleeper Media is turning to biodegradable polywrapping, meaning the distribution of our magazines will be more sustainable going forward.

Changing the global mindset towards single-use plastics will not happen overnight, but with the rise of biodegradable and recyclable alternatives, attitudes are slowly beginning to shift. Consumers are making informed buying decisions based upon sustainability concerns, driving hotels to prove their eco-credentials and accelerating the eradication of plastic waste – a move that may not solve the crisis, but at the very least demonstrates why certain parts of the hospitality industry could prove to be part of the solution rather than the problem.