

Friday 5 January 2018

## **Paper Cup Alliance cautions against measures that will hurt consumers and high streets.**

Responding to today's report from the Environmental Audit Committee following its 'Disposable Packaging: Coffee Cups and Plastic Bottles' inquiry, the Paper Cup Alliance (PCA) has welcomed the recognition of industry efforts to increase recycling but cautioned against measures that hurt consumers and harm the high street economy.

Speaking on behalf of the PCA, Mike Turner said:

*"Paper cups are the most sustainable and safe solution for drinks on-the-go. Consumers want to do the right thing and we're taking steps to support that through new infrastructure and country-wide initiatives.*

*"The paper cups we manufacture in the UK are sustainably sourced, responsibly produced, recyclable and, through a number of facilities, are being recycled. We are committed to increasing recycling rates. Over 4,000 new recycling points were created in 2017 and a new country-wide initiative is launching during January increasing options for consumers to recycle. Taxing the morning coffee run will not address the issue of litter but it will hurt consumers and impact already struggling high streets. No packaging type is totally recycled and a ban on paper cups would hit manufacturing jobs and damage a growing service industry which makes a major contribution to UK Plc."*

New research carried out in December 2017 has shown that, while coffee sales are cushioning local retailers from a tough climate, this life-line is threatened by a potential latte levy. The consumer survey showed that 75% of Britons would visit, on average, two other shops when they popped out for a coffee and spend around £15. However, indications are that introducing a tax on coffee cups will significantly deter shoppers, with over one third saying it would negatively affect how often they visited their local high street.

The cups we produce meet the most stringent health, safety and food hygiene regulations, keeping consumers safe. Cups made by PCA members use traceable wood fibre from certified sustainable forests. As a result of sustainable forestry practices, forests in Europe have doubled since the 1950s. In Finland alone the forests are growing by 100million m<sup>3</sup> a year meaning wood fibre for global paper cups is equivalent to only 4% of Finland's annual production – around 15 days of tree growth in Finnish forests.

Whilst paper cups make up only 0.7% of total paper packaging waste and 0.1% of total household waste, we acknowledge that too few cups are being recycled and we are working hard across the industry to improve on this. In October 2017, organisations from across the paper cup supply chain signed an agreement with the Alliance for Beverage Cartons and the Environment (ACE UK) to accelerate UK recycling of paper cups. The cross-industry collaboration will work towards delivering a long-term, nationwide paper cup recycling solution. The programme includes:

- From January 2018 all ACE UK bring banks will accept paper cups for recycling, delivering an additional 415 recycling points located in 105 local authorities across the UK.
- Cups from these recycling points will be processed at ACE UK's recycling facility in Halifax.

- Drawing on its experience and existing relationships with local authorities, waste management organisations and recycling bodies, ACE UK will work to include cups in local authority kerbside collections. In addition to those which collect through bring banks, 66% of local authorities currently collect beverage cartons at kerbside, and it is hoped to achieve similar levels of coverage for cups.

ACE UK has been successfully running the beverage carton industry's recycling programme for the last ten years driving significant increases in carton recycling as part of its role as the UK beverage carton industry trade body. During this time it has worked closely with local authorities and waste management companies so that today 92% of local authorities collect beverage cartons for recycling through either bring banks or kerbside collection.

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### **About the PCA**

The Paper Cup Alliance (PCA) is made up of the eight market-leading paper cup manufacturers in the UK today, employing over 1,700 people across the country. The group was formed in 2017 to coordinate industry efforts to address the issue of paper cup recycling. PCA members are working hard to increase recycling in the UK through a variety of initiatives and through supporting the right behaviours. It aims to better communicate the industry's efforts on paper cup recycling to reassure stakeholders that the industry takes its environmental responsibilities seriously.

PCA members are part of Pack2Go, the European Association for convenience food packaging, but are specifically focused on the issue of paper cups in the UK.

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