



Conscious cleaning

Could the lockdown legacy be a nation more committed to eco living? **Jo Caird** takes stock of the products steering people in a cleaner, greener direction

There's nothing like being stuck indoors for months on end to make you focus on how you run your home. During lockdown, all those little details we were too busy to pay proper attention to before – from cleaning products to homewares to beauty treatments – were suddenly front and centre in our lives. And with that focus came, for many people, a realization that it was time for a change: the perfect moment to embrace a cleaner, greener lifestyle.

Home hygiene, unsurprisingly, has been a central concern for most of us. When the pandemic first hit, consumers emptied supermarket shelves of big brand cleaning products. "Several months of cleaning with harmful harsh chemicals has resulted in a toxic home," says Phil Stone of eco cleaning brand Squeaky Cleaners. We may have kept the virus at bay, but we risk damaging our health in other ways by breathing in these products, he explains.

The good news is that when it comes to killing coronavirus on surfaces there's really no need for all those harsh chemicals – cleaning with soap and water, then disinfecting with a standard household disinfectant will do the job just fine. And for all those other important

cleaning tasks – from removing limescale to keeping your windows smear-free – organic, plant-based products like those from Squeaky Cleaners offer a much more eco-friendly alternative to the big brands.

It's not just the ingredients that matter; to be truly sustainable, eco cleaning brands must pay attention to packaging too. While Squeaky Cleaners products come in aluminium bottles, Colt & Willow, another newcomer on the sustainable cleaning products scene, opts for glass. And Ecoleaf, from the long-established eco-cooperative Suma, introduced new greener packaging at the start of 2020, with all bottles now made from post-consumer recycled plastic. All three companies also offer refill packs.

Another company innovating in this field is smol, which sells laundry and dishwashing products via subscription. Its capsules and tablets have always been plastic-free but this spring saw the introduction of plastic-free packaging for the neat little parcels that drop through your letter box every couple of weeks.

"Since launching our new packs in March 2020 we have managed to save over 50

tonnes in plastic," says smol co-founder Paula Quaz.

Alongside the many brands turning away from plastic packaging are those that create products to help wean us off our wider plastic addiction. The Australian

"The UK still lags behind Australia when it comes to awareness of reusable products"

company Onya launched its first reusable shopping bag in 2004 and has since extended to reusable drinking vessels, food storage solutions and all manner of bags. Many of these products are actually made from recycled plastic drinks bottles – 1,043,340 in 2019 alone.

Post-pandemic promises

The UK still lags behind Australia when it comes to awareness of reusable products, says Onya managing director Hayley Clarke. But she's hopeful for the future.

"With Sky News reporting that post-lockdown around 94% of Brits were looking to lower their carbon footprint,

we are excited to see the desire to act around environmental issues, including plastic pollution, is growing."

The team behind Elephant Box, which makes lunch boxes and other homeware products mainly from stainless steel, can attest to that. Liz Watson, the company's co-founder, reports a 'big rise' in interest in its newest plastic-free range since the pandemic hit, including a prototype stainless steel washing-up bowl.

"We developed this product as a test and it was very successful. So much so that it's now sold out! But we have been developing a finished product based on the feedback that should be available by early autumn," Watson says.

Fully biodegradable products such as bamboo and coir are coming into their own on the sustainable homewares market too. Wild & Stone's beautiful bamboo cutlery sets, which come in a cloth carrying bag, are long-lasting but can biodegrade in as little as a few weeks. TODDS launched its Sri Lanka-made coir dishwashing scourers in the UK this year and extended the range during lockdown to include bottle brushes and toilet brushes.

The luxury side of things is taken care of by brands like Kukena Naturals, which produces hand-made candles in Cornwall, and Glamwax, whose scented home diffuser melts each release nine hours of scent. Both brands use 100% vegan waxes.

It's not just our homes that need looking after of course – their hardworking occupants also deserve a little eco living TLC. That might mean opting for a brand like Faith in Nature that lets you refill bottles of hair and bodycare products at selected retailers. Or perhaps eschewing plastic altogether with a solid product from the likes of Ethique, which makes hair and body product bars, or Beauty Kubes, which form a paste when crumbled with wet hands.

And when it comes to self-care paraphernalia there are all manner of products to choose between, from Bambaw's reusable make-up removal wipes and safety razors and sponges from The Konjac Sponge Co, to brushes and combs from ecoLiving.

Lockdown may be over but hopefully the cleaner, greener home and self-care routines that it prompted are here to stay. With so many excellent eco living products on the market, it's easier than ever to run a sustainable home.

Essentials Pack

Colt & Willow Ltd
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Most people don't realise that our homes are full of harmful toxins—and the products we use to clean with are damaging our health, our skin & our loved ones. We've created a range of powerful plant based cleaning products that look good, smell good & do good—transforming the cleaning experience for you, your family, your home & the planet so you can feel happy, confident & safe. Created and owned by a young family and proudly made in the UK. The Essentials Pack contains our most popular products – our Rhubarb Washing Up liquid, Geranium All Purpose cleaner and Rosemary, Lemon & Juniper Bathroom cleaner. All come in reusable glass bottles and are refillable with our 1 litre PET bottles. No harsh detergents, no phosphates, no parabens, no SLS. Vegan and cruelty free. We are also a proud member of 1% For The Planet.



Ecoleaf by Suma

Suma Wholefoods
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www.suma.coop/ecoleaf

Suma has been on a mission to make cleaning greener for years. They started over thirty years ago by introducing the first 100% recycled toilet roll. Now they're helping customers ditch single-use plastics. Their cleaning range comes in 100% post-consumer recycled packaging. That's previously used plastic that gets reprocessed and remade into something new—products made from post-consumer plastic close the loop, diverting plastic from landfill. Ecoleaf by Suma cleaning products are plant-based, so they're not just great at their job, they're also natural and vegan. Retail size and refills available. Remember to ask for point-of-sale material and drum taps.



Elephant Box Leakproof Range

Elephant Box
E-mail: sales@elephantbox.co.uk
www.elephantbox.co.uk

Long Live the Lunchbox! New Elephant Box Leakproof Range. Lunchboxes are making a comeback as people are choosing to pack their own lunch so they can eat well & avoid unnecessary packaging and they want durable, plastic-free & sustainable lunchboxes. Elephant Box provide high quality food-grade stainless steel lunchboxes & other reusables to meet this need. Their new leakproof range makes it even easier to prep store & carry healthy and nutritious meals. The addition of a removable food grade silicone seal makes these products 100% leakproof. Elephant Box are committed to plastic-free packaging throughout their entire supply chain.



A wide range of zero-waste products

Sustainable swaps for your customers

During these changing times, sustainability becomes increasingly crucial. To empower conscious consumers to reduce the waste generated on earth, Bambaw develops zero-waste swaps, which are reusable or biodegradable alternatives to wasteful products. These are divided into three categories: Home & Kitchen – Bathroom – Nomad

Zero-waste by Design

Bambaw's zero-waste alternatives are available in bulk or with plastic-free packaging.

To ensure user satisfaction, all swaps include a digital user manual explaining their proper use, care, and afterlife.

Bambaw products are crafted ethically and tested independently to ensure highest quality standards. Every order is shipped rapidly in full CO2 neutrality. A part of the sales supports two leading NGO's on plastic pollution.

Bambaw's bathroom range

Three of our favourite zero-waste bathroom swaps are:

Metal Safety Razors

The metal safety razors allow your customers the smoothest shave without creating any waste. Choose between rose gold, silver and black, with and without a stand. Bambaw also provides replacement blades.

Makeup Remover Pads

The reusable makeup remover pads are available in bulk, a robust cardboard box or a plastic-free square packaging. There are two types of pads to meet all your customers' makeup removal needs. Also, a handy laundry bag is included.

Bamboo Cotton Buds

Strong bamboo cotton buds are the ideal replacement for the outdated plastic version. They are packed in a sturdy cardboard box and come in packs of 200 and 400.

Catering to Your Needs

As one of the zero-waste-swap pioneers on the market, Bambaw has extensive experience in handling a varied range of customers, and the know-how to meet your specific needs. If you are interested in samples, contact us.

Bambaw
Waste less, live more

Bambaw Tel: 01224 545310
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Peppermint & Eucalyptus Shampoo

Friendly Soap Ltd
www.friendlysoap.co.uk

Every Friendly shampoo bar comes in a recycled and recyclable card box printed with veggie inks (Not a plastic bottle in sight!)

If those clever clog ancient Greeks and Romans used medicinal mint, there's got to be something in it. As well as smelling great it can relieve itchiness and has mild anti-fungal properties. Eucalyptus is known as a natural disinfectant that's also a great nose unblocker. As for the organic argan, it's a wonderful natural conditioner, leaving your locks stronger, healthier and a doddle to style and manage.



We Love the Planet Deodorants

Kinetic Natural Products Distributor
 Tel: 08450 725 825
 E-mail: sales@kinetic4health.co.uk
www.kinetic4health.co.uk

We Love the Planet is a wonderfully soft and very effective range of Deo Creams. Available in five different fragrances along with a fragrance-free So Sensitive option, packaged in either a snaplock tin (48g) or a wide-opening biodegradable and compostable cardboard tube (65g), both containers are recyclable and zero plastic. 100% of the ingredients are from natural origin - certified by

Natural Cosmetics Standard (NCS) and EcoControl. Each aluminium-free deodorant is based on a combination of coconut oil, beeswax and cornstarch powder to offer a smooth application, baking soda to neutralise odours naturally,



J.R Liggett's Old Fashioned Shampoo Bars

Mahi Naturals Ltd
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www.mahinaturals.com

New to the UK, J.R. Liggett's old fashioned shampoo bars are gentle, natural and suitable for all hair types. One zero waste plastic free bar is equivalent to 2-3 bottles of shampoo. The 100% vegetable oil formulation lathers quickly and rinses out easily, leaving you with healthy, beautiful, and clean hair. It will not strip the natural oils from your hair as the formula is free from detergents, SLS, artificial fragrances, colours and preservatives. Safe for sensitive scalps. Established 40 years ago, the bars are still handmade today. The bars are multipurpose and can also be used for the body, shaving, clothes and even dishes. Available in 6 different varieties in retail ready cases. Gift and travel options available too



Available in Sugarcane, Wheat and Bamboo varieties with the famous "Never Go Soggy" guarantee. The 100% natural alternative to plastic and paper straws.

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Plastic Free and triple FSC-certified Cloths

Maistic Bio Group
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www.maistic.com

Microplastic and microfibres from cleaning products provides thousands of tons of plastic pollution every year. The Danish company Maistic has specialized in plastic free products and home compostable bags at consumer friendly prices. Biobased washable cloths and scourers are among the bestsellers and easy switches for all. This August the popular Maistic-cloths – a wood based viscose cloth without the polyester fibres - is introduced as triple FSC-certified, meaning both the viscose fibres, the paper packing and the display cartons are sustainably sourced. Recommended price 8pcs pack is £2.75. Sold in web shops, supermarkets and eco stores, e.g. Planet Organic, hollandandbarrett.com, Biggrensmile.co.uk



Ditch single use plastic and think reusable

Onya
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www.onyalife.co.uk

Since 2004, Onya have been offering reusable alternatives for single use plastic to the world. As a certified B Corporation, their products are ethically and sustainably produced from recycled materials where possible, and all products are 100% recyclable at the end of their long lives through their partnership with Terracycle. Even their packaging is made from post-consumer recycled materials, printed with plant-based inks and is 100% recyclable and compostable. In 2019 alone, due to sales of Onya products, around 3.23million bottles were used/diverted from landfill. To view their range including Lunch Wraps, Drink Bottles, Bread Bags and more head to <https://onyalife.co.uk/products/>



Experience a new dimension of skincare

Pravera Ltd
 Tel: 01557 870203
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Discover lavera's secret to beautifully radiant and fresh skin with the new natural and organic Hydro Sensation skincare range. The range includes a Serum, Face Mist, Gel Cream and a Micellar Cleansing Water. The Hydro Sensation skincare range has an innovative and intensely hydrating formula that includes a complex of natural hyaluronic acid and organic algae to help revitalise and replenish the skins moisture levels, leaving skin feeling fresh, hydrated and moisturised with a natural healthy glow. Certified natural and organic by Natrue and registered vegan with the Vegan Society. RRP's start from just £9.95.



The reusable and portable telescopic straw with keychain case

Last Straw Official
 E-mail: katie@thelast.company
www.thelast.company

Last Straw is the reusable and portable telescopic straw with keychain case. The telescopic straw is made from food grade stainless steel that fully extends to 19cm. It is dishwasher safe and easy to clean with a cleaning brush included. The case is made from anodised aluminium and comes with a keyring making it really easy to carry round. It is zero plastic.

There are 7 colours available, and each come individually boxed and packed in ready to use counter display boxes. Designed in London by The Last Co. we are proud to be 1% for the Planet members.



Enna Cycle menstrual cup

World Foods Brand Management
 Tel: 01782 366080
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www.wfbm.co.uk



Menstrual cups are becoming one of the fastest growing feminine health care products in the war on plastic. The New Enna Cycle menstrual cup is the ONLY cup to come with an applicator and comfort string to ease extraction; it also provides more capacity and it is available in three different sizes. Providing better value the Enna cycle provides 2 cups for the price often paid for 1 and also comes complete with a travel case in which to store and sterilise it, making it perfect for on-the-go.

Squeeky Clean

Squeeky Solutions
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www.squeekyshop.co.uk



Here at Squeeky Solutions; We pride ourselves on being a small, independent business- that packs a big punch in the natural products market. Organic, eco-friendly, pet safe and vegan. All wrapped up in our lightweight aluminium 'life bottles' with trigger head- our cleaning products bring comfort to householders who worry about the effects of modern day living by removing all toxins, harsh chemicals and most plastics for the benefit of not only the home, but people, pets and of course; Planet Earth too. Because if "squeeky clean" can also be "green" – What's not to love?