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Businesses sign up for free bottle refill project



Wotton Chamber of Trade president Martin Tucker with Derek Thomas and Keiran Underwood who are taking part in the water refill scheme

By Josh
Wright



BUSINESSES in Wotton-under-Edge have become the first in Gloucestershire to sign up to a scheme offering free water bottle refills to the public.

As well as doing their part to tackle the problem of plastic waste, they hope that the service will encourage more walkers and cyclists using the Cotswold Way to stop in the town.

With the well-trodden route passing right through the town's main shopping street, Wotton Heritage Centre, WH Thomas & Son, Walkers the Bakers and The Swan have all signed up to take part.

Anyone will be able to bring bottles into any of the registered premises and staff will refill them free of charge.

"Plastic waste has been a big topic recently," said Wotton-under-Edge Chamber of Trade president Martin Tucker. "One of our members spotted this scheme in Bristol and thought it would work well here.

"Aside from just helping to reduce the number of plastic bottles which people use, the scheme will help bring walkers and cyclists - of which we have a lot in Wotton - into our shops where they might spend some money.

"We hope it will encourage people to stay in the town for a bit longer than they might have done otherwise.

"There's a movement in the town to become a Cotswold Gateway and this scheme will help us become even more attractive in that regard, particularly as the town sits on the Cotswold Way."

Refill started in Bristol in September 2015 and has since spread out across the country with more than 1,600 refill points in the UK.

Visitors to Wotton will be able to find premises which have signed up to take part in the scheme through an app or online at refill.org.uk.

The scheme was started as a way to reduce the number of single-use plastic bottles used in the country, particularly those that ended up washed up on the banks of the River Avon in Bristol.

It is estimated that every minute 800 bottles are thrown away and end up in landfill sites.

A report published last year found that 59 per cent would be more likely to use a reusable water bottle if refills were more widely offered by businesses and other organisations.

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