



# ECOmmunication January 2020

**2019 IN REVIEW: JEREMY CLARKSON  
ACCEPTS CLIMATE CHANGE?**

**A real tipping point?**



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# LOOKING BACK ON 2019 GREEN BECOMES MAINSTREAM

Adam Briggs' View. Jan 2020

From Greta Thunberg becoming a household name, to the Extinction Rebellion climate change protests of last summer, to shopper concerns over single-use plastic,<sup>(1)</sup> to the Australian bushfires that continue to rage into January 2020... Few can deny the media impact and the grassroots groundswell that is gathering momentum in the fight for Planet Earth. It's a big question: can humanity continue to thrive beyond 2050 and into the 22nd Century if we carry on the way we are going? As a scientist by background, with twenty years of business experience, my conclusion is that we cannot. At least not while we inhabit this one planet with finite resources and a finite capacity to absorb the impact of human activity. The cover image focuses on Jeremy Clarkson and this may seem a strange choice, but the way this news coverage unfolded from November 2019 was actually very telling of a deep societal problem: after reporting that Mr. Clarkson had accepted climate change, within a few days the narrative had turned to one of annoyance that 'Greta Thunberg has killed the car show'.<sup>(2,3)</sup> And therein lies the rub. If one accepts climate change and the scientific consensus on predicted impacts,<sup>(4)</sup> the conclusion is that "Business as Usual" is not an option to respond to a crisis of this magnitude. Future economic growth cannot be driven by ever-continuing material throughput and unchecked consumption (and car shows may need to focus more on electric vehicles, train travel options and the humble peddle-bike...). The real tipping point will be when businesses, governments and broader society accept the far-reaching consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss. With defined planetary boundaries, it's time to think smarter and behave differently. Industry has a key role and a responsibility to drive change at pace within its sphere of influence.

## UNLOCKING CHANGE: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

With a reach beyond the Consumer Packaged Goods sector, the purpose of this "Ecommunication" newsletter is to link together a wide network of individuals from within and outside business who want to accelerate the pace of positive environmental change, by sharing newsworthy items.

Collaboration and Communication will be key to untap sustainable solutions. Our JB ARC "Quadruple Win" concept is helping drive progress in the CPG sector, and the principles can be applied elsewhere.



## ADAM BRIGGS PROFILE

After twenty years working in Global Consumer Packaged Goods (Unilever, Johnson & Johnson) Adam joins JB, as our Director of Category Strategy, Shopper Insight and Sustainability. Leveraging his prior scientific background and a broad network of contacts, he has recently completed business courses at Cambridge University's Institute for Sustainability Leadership.

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# THE QUAD WINS NEWS REVIEW: Jan 2020

## Focus on Plastic Packaging & Recycling



### MANUFACTURER NEWS

**UNILEVER 5 YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH VIRIDOR TO PROVIDE SUPPLY OF RECYCLED PLASTIC<sup>(5)</sup>**

An example of long term collaboration to drive progress with scale. This 'circular economy' initiative is in the face of poor recycling infrastructure in the UK where the quality of available recycled plastic can be variable or poor, especially for food-grade needs.

What long term collaborations could be highlighted to advantage in your business for internal and external audiences?



### RETAILER NEWS

**TESCO SUCCESSFUL RECYCLING COLLECTION TRIAL IN SOUTH WEST ENGLAND<sup>(7)</sup>**

An encouraging case of successful shopper engagement and care, with less than 2% of received waste being non-plastic.

**TESCO SET TO DITCH 'UNECESSARY' PLASTIC FOR MULTIPACK TINS<sup>(8)</sup>**

After a trial in the Cambridge Bar Hill store, this initiative is to be rolled out nationally from March 2020, joining forces with the likes of Heinz and Green Giant. Essentially -multi deals don't need banded multi-packs!

How best to communicate your successes for inspiration and momentum?



### MANUFACTURER NEWS

**NESTLÉ COMMITS £1.6BN TO FOOD-GRADE RECYCLED PLASTICS, PLEDGES TO CUT VIRGIN PLASTICS BY THIRD<sup>(6)</sup>**

Nestlé have just announced their plastics initiatives including funding start up companies to develop innovative plastics solutions and working to reduced the amount of plastics ending up in landfill, or as litter/ocean pollution, including joining Project STOP.

Are your sustainability plans integrated into your business strategy or retail-facing category strategy?



### RETAILER NEWS

**ASDA LAUNCHES TRIAL STORE WITH REFILL POINTS FOR KELLOGGS AND PG TIPS<sup>(9)</sup>**

Time will tell: A three month trial in an ASDA Leeds trial store in which shopper feedback will be collated before a decision on roll-out in its current form will be made.

What's next? Thought Leadership opportunities that can help suppliers or retailers make collaborative progress and land workable solutions for store and shoppers?



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### SHOPPER LENS

While younger consumers and students are perceived to be leading the eco-charge, when it comes to shopping, data shows that the oldest age group (75+) were just ahead of the Millennials & Gen Zs on several aspects of stated sustainable purchase behaviour.

(Shoppercentric 'Windows On' Sept 2019 Issue)

38% of UK Shoppers say sustainability has been a bigger driver of product choice for them in 2019 versus the prior year, with 72% of Gen Z's saying they will be increasing their eco-friendly purchases in 2020.

(Green Shoots Research, December 2019 and Jan 2020 Omnibus Surveys)



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### SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT LENS

Greta Thunberg's analysis of the "COP 25" Madrid Climate conference<sup>(10)</sup> in Dec 2019, included a view that "Only setting up distant dates and saying things which give the impression of the action is underway will most likely do more harm than good." Continued pressure is needed for National climate commitments to be stepped up to the needed levels.<sup>(11)</sup>

The CPG industry has an opportunity to break the cynicism of failed targets with respect to the UK Plastics Pact 2025,<sup>(12)</sup> and deliver on time.<sup>(13)</sup>



### SO WHAT FOR INSIGHT INTO ACTION?

There is a rapid evolution in attitudes towards sustainability and the facts are not always what you may expect.

Is your shopper insight up to date and embedded within your business strategies, growth drivers and communications?



### SO WHAT FOR CPG/FMCG?

Has your company signed up to the UK Plastics Pact? (Targets above)

Is your communication strategy defined for internal and external audiences as you embark on this journey?

# References

- (1) Single-use plastic was found to be the most avoided form of packaging in recent UK shopper research (Shoppercentric research 2019)
- (2) <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2019/nov/24/jeremy-clarkson-climate-crisis-cambodia-trip-grand-tour>. (Walawalkar, A., 24/11/19)
- (3) <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/entertainment/tv/jeremy-clarkson-greta-thunberg-has-killed-the-car-show/ar-BBXoEtr?ocid=spartandhp> (Lloyd, A., 27/11/2019)
- (4) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/science-environment-51123638>. (Shukman, D., 16/01/20).  
Note: Includes Climate Tracker prediction graph to 2100.
- (5) <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/unilever-signs-recycled-plastics-deal-with-iridor/> (Quinault, C., 20/11/19)
- (6) <https://www.edie.net/news/5/Nestle-commits-1-6bn-to-food-grade-recycled-plastics--pledges-to-cut-virgin-plastics-use-by-a-third/> (Edie Newsroom, 16/01/20)
- (7) <https://recyclingtechnologies.co.uk/2019/11/our-collection-trial-with-tesco-successfully-completed/> (News centre release, 14/11/19)
- (8) <https://www-standard-co-uk.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/tesco-scrap-plastic-wrap-multipack-tinned-food-a4343326.html?amp> (Baker T. 24/01/20)
- (9) <https://www-scotsman-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.scotsman.com/news/people/kellogg-s-cereal-and-pg-tips-tea-available-from-refill-point-at-new-sustainability-store-1-5075825/amp> (Bradle, J, 16/01/20)
- (10) <https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1216452/Greta-Thunberg-UN-speech-full-COP25-Greta-Thunberg-speech-transcript-climate-change> (Kettley, S.; 13/12/19)
- (11) <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2019/12/16/madrid-talks-turned-back-climate-action/>. (Mathiesen, K., 16/12/2019)
- (12) <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/what-uk-plastics-pact> (Accessed 21/02/20)
- (13) <https://www.letsrecycle.com/news/latest-news/packaging-data-suggests-2019-targets-met/> (Doherty, J., 17/01/20)



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT JB ARC ECOMMUNICATION NEWSLETTER?

This newsletter is a chance to connect people who can collaborate, support and challenge each other. The only criterion is to operate in a mindset that is 'Good for the Planet and Society.'

Future topics will likely cover carbon footprint and climate impact, trade-offs and unintended consequences, shopper communication and education, engaging hearts and minds with eco-communications. Contributions dependent!

To discuss further please contact:

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## CAN WE HELP?

If you have sustainability messages to give to your customers, employees, suppliers or other stakeholders, just get in touch. JB Communications have decades of experience in delivering multi-media messages that hit the right note with impact.

With Adam Briggs joining JB and launching JB ARC we offer seamless solutions from insight into action, content creation and communication:

<https://jbcommunications.co.uk/jb-arc/>

Within our network of experts, we have developed sustainability focused partnerships to help drive insights into growth for our clients. E.G. see *Shoppercentric 'Windows On'*. Feb 2020 Issue

