



# Reusable period products: Consumer campaign

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# What we will cover today



- Background and context
- Highlights from consumer research
- Campaign approach
- Getting involved





**So, why a period campaign from Zero Waste Scotland?**





# Highlights from consumer research: Objectives



The overall aim was to conduct research with consumers on re-usable menstrual products that will support the upcoming behaviour change campaign designed to encourage people to switch from single use sanitary products to re-usable items. Associated research objectives were to:

- 1: Understand current patterns of use in the sanitary product market
- Understand consumers' attitudes to reusable sanitary products
- 3: Identify what would motivate – or discourage – people to switch from disposable sanitary products to reusable alternatives
- 4: Identify whether certain groups / messages / locations should be specifically targeted by an intervention
- 5: Start to identify the best language and messages to use in communications



# How did we conduct the research?

## 1) Evidence review

- Topline review of existing evidence on consumer behaviour and market trends, perceptions/attitudes, what could motivate people to switch
- Included review of menstrual product provider websites and social media platforms
- ***Identified evidence gaps to be met by the primary research***

## 2) Qualitative research

- 59 respondents
- 1:1, paired depths/triads, mini groups
- Mix of users/non-users of re-usables
- Mix of SEG, age, period stage, environmental attitudes
- Female team of moderators
- Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumfries, Aberdeen & Inverness
- Included community organisations to engage with harder to reach groups
- ***Used to inform quant survey design***

## 3) Quantitative survey

- Online survey – 1,015 sample
- Dynata online panel
- Scottish sample
- 16-55 year olds using menstrual products
- Loose quotas set for age group and SEG
- Data weighted to be nat rep



# Qualitative sample

Area	#
Aberdeen	8
Dumfries	9
Edinburgh	15
Glasgow	19
Inverness	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

Age group	#
16-25	21
26-39	24
40-55	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

SEG	#
ABC1	35
C2DE	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

Children	#
Have children	25
No children	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

re-usable product use	#
Users	17
Non-users	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

Ethnicity	#
White/White Scottish/White British	52
Black/African/Caribbean/Black Scottish/Black British	3
Asian/Asian Scottish/ Asian British	2
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>

*The qualitative sample also included 5 students.*

*We aimed to include representation from the transgender community through engagement with community groups, but unfortunately this was not possible.*



# Quantitative sample

Age group	Unweighted	Weighted
16~25	18%	<b>24%</b>
26~34	28%	<b>23%</b>
35~44	32%	<b>26%</b>
45~54	22%	<b>28%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>1,015</b>

Period stage	Unweighted	Weighted
Regular periods	72%	<b>71%</b>
Temporary break	10%	<b>9%</b>
Peri-menopausal	17%	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>1,015</b>

Have children	Unweighted	Weighted
Yes	53%	<b>52%</b>
No	46%	<b>47%</b>
Prefer not to say	1%	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>1,015</b>

SEG	Unweighted	Weighted
AB	26%	<b>18%</b>
C1	35%	<b>31%</b>
C2	17%	<b>22%</b>
DE	21%	<b>27%</b>
Prefer not to say	2%	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>1,015</b>

Region	Unweighted	Weighted
Central Scotland	8%	<b>8%</b>
Glasgow	15%	<b>15%</b>
Highlands and Islands	6%	<b>6%</b>
Lothian	19%	<b>18%</b>
Mid Scotland and Fife	9%	<b>9%</b>
North East Scotland	16%	<b>17%</b>
South Scotland	13%	<b>13%</b>
West Scotland	12%	<b>12%</b>
Don't know/not sure	<1%	<b>&lt;1%</b>
Prefer not to say	1%	<b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>1,015</b>

NB: The main body of this report generally includes sub-group analysis based on current/previous use of re-usable products. Demographic and attitudinal analysis is included in the 'target market' section.



# Evidence review

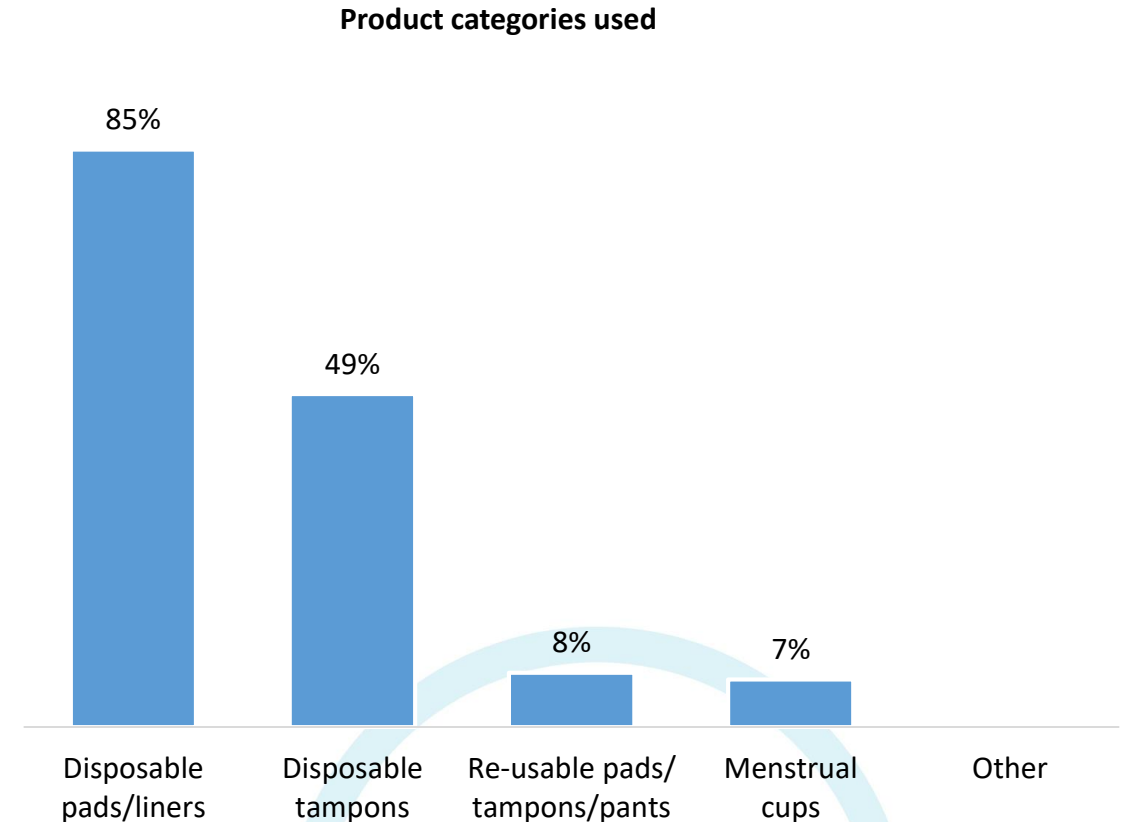
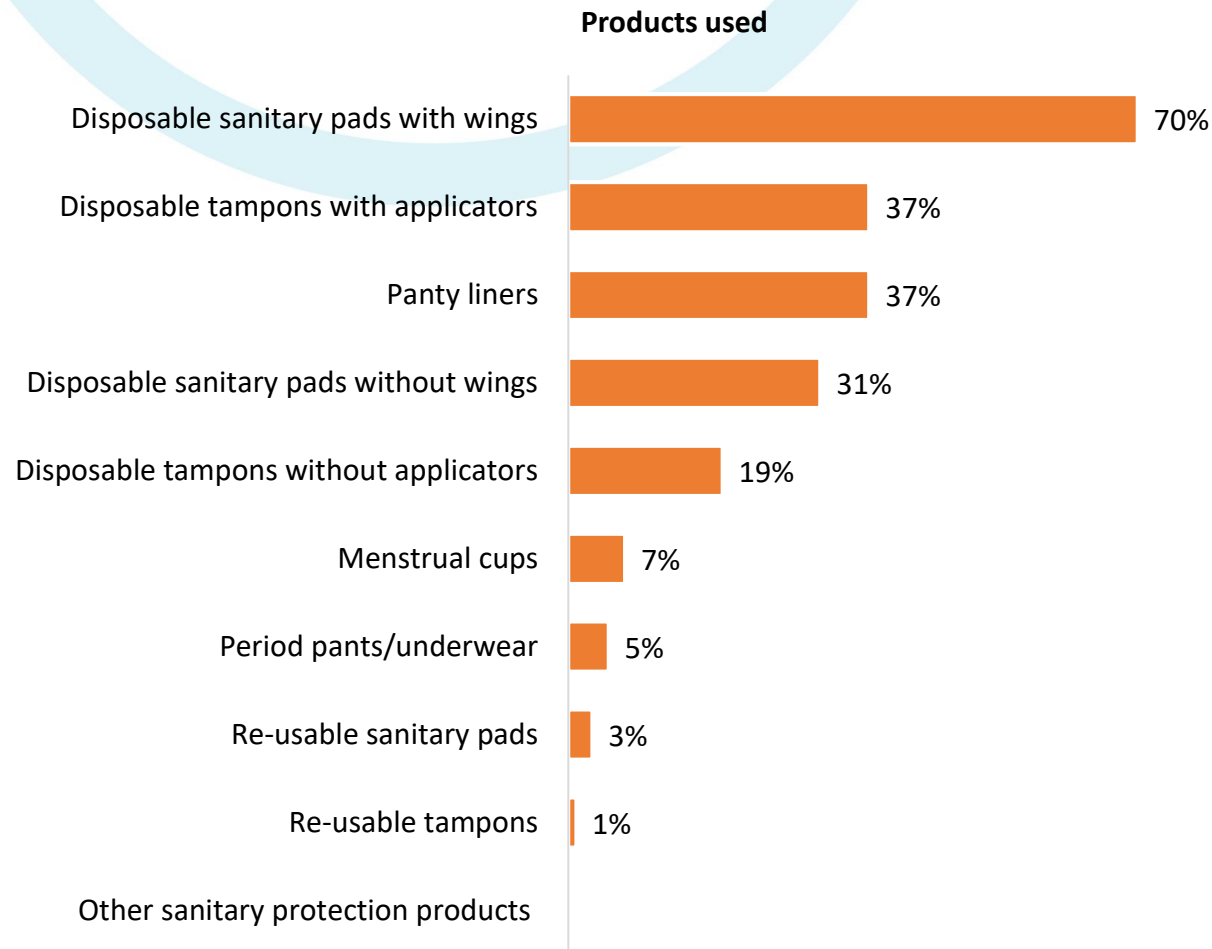


- UK consumers of menstrual products are most likely to use disposable sanitary pads with wings (63%) **4% of those surveyed use menstrual cups, 3% use reusable sanitary pads and 1% use reusable tampons.**
- Almost half (48%) of those surveyed by Mintel in 2017 reported worrying about the environmental impact of sanitary protection products and 30% expressed an interest in trying reusable products.
- Most of research carried out in terms of reusables was around cup use...



# Primary research – usage.

## Disposable products by far the most common – but 13% mentioned reusables



Q4. Which of the following sanitary/menstrual products do you typically use? (Multicode) Base (all): 1,015

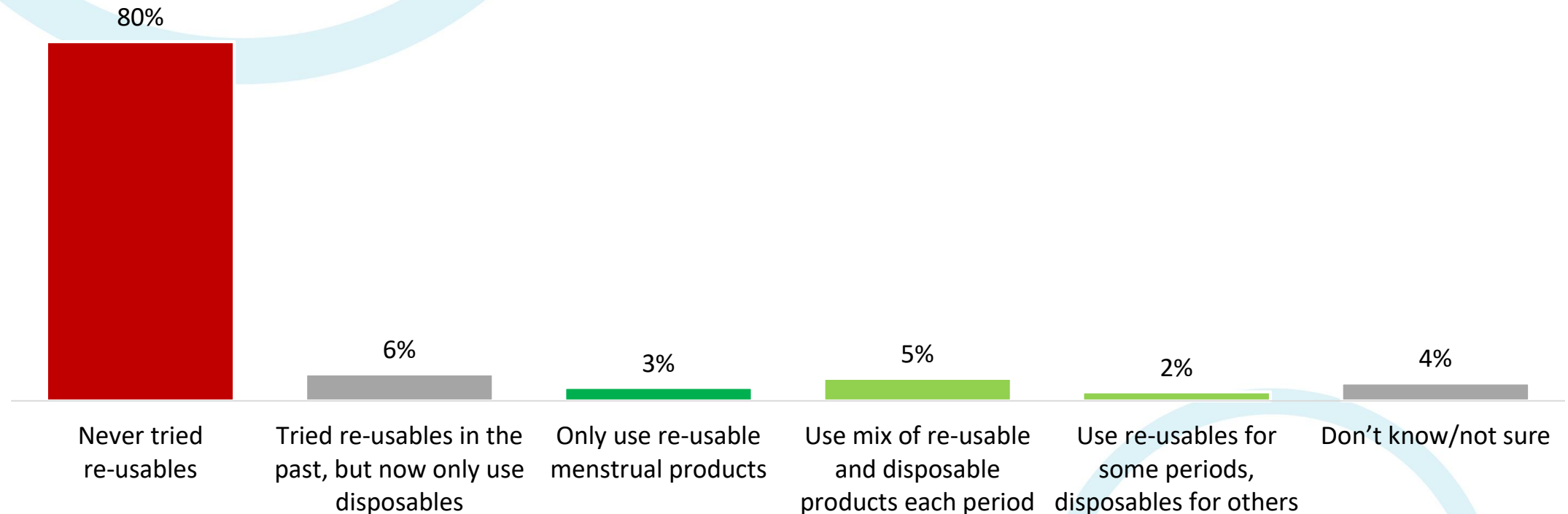
*Data is broadly comparable with Mintel's smaller-scale UK-wide 2018 study, though slightly higher % mentioning re-usable products in this sample.*



**Usage:** most (80%) have never tried reusables. Current use is at 10%, just 3% use solely reusable products



Use of re-usable products



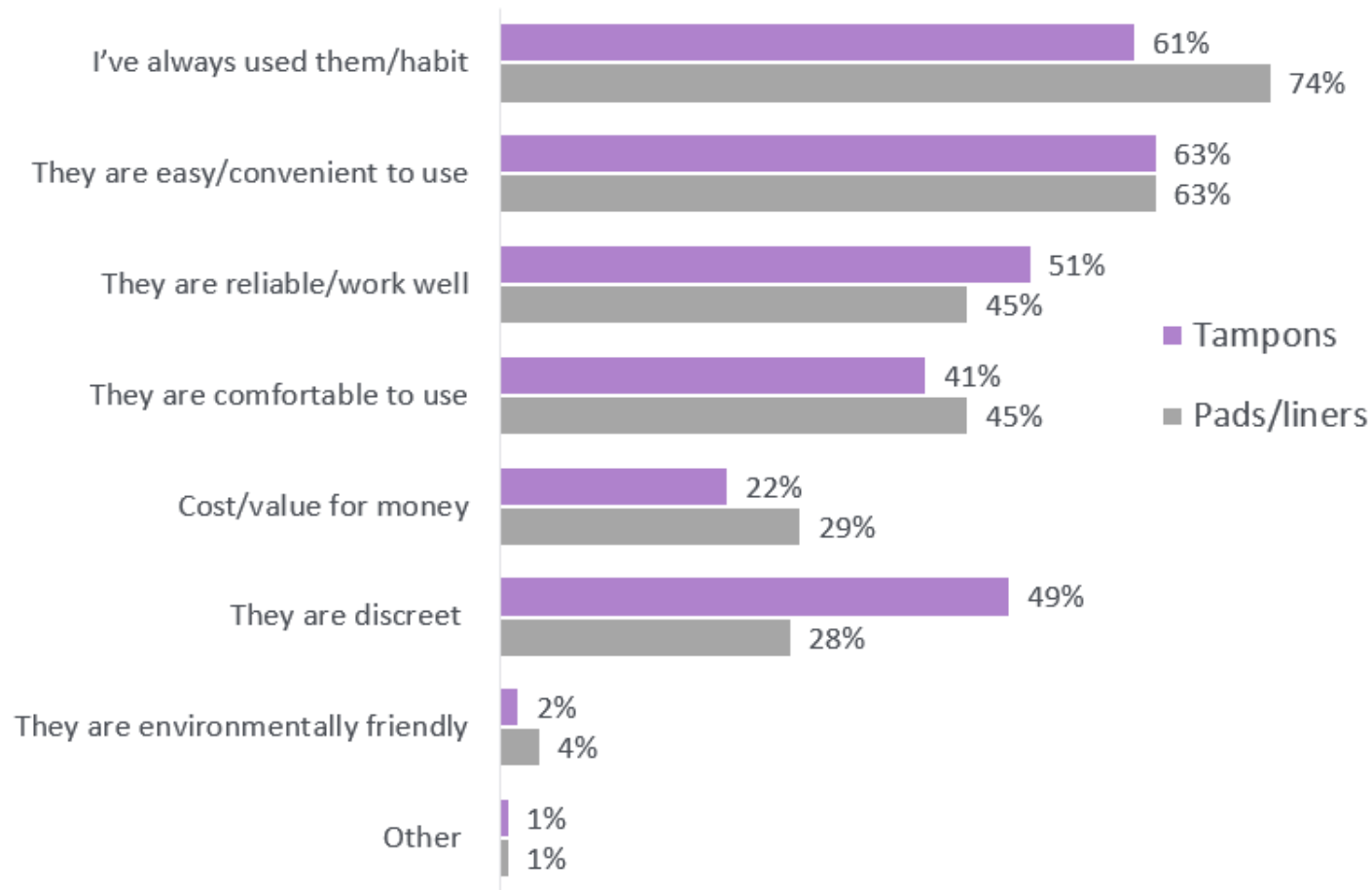
Q14. Which of the following statements best describes your use of re-usable sanitary/menstrual products, e.g. menstrual cups, re-usable pads, re-usable tampons, period pants/underwear? Base (all): 1,015



**Usage:** Most use disposables out of habit, for convenience, reliability and comfort – and for tampons, discretion. A fifth use organic, biodegradable or plastic free disposable products

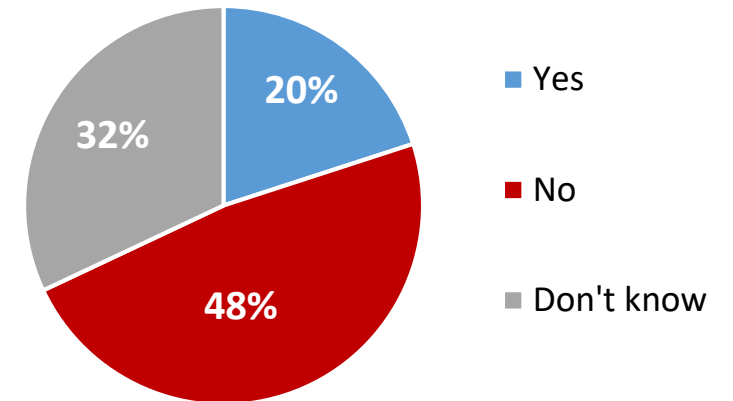


Reasons for using (disposable products)



Q5. Why do you use disposable pads/liners? / Q6. Why do you use disposable tampons? (Multicode)  
Base (all using): pads/liners 861; tampons 498

Use organic, biodegradable or plastic free



Q9. Do you use organic, biodegradable or plastic free disposable products? Base (all using disposable products): 989



# Quotes on product choice/usage



*I mostly use the cup, but I also have these pants, like re-usable period pants, but yes, sometimes obviously I use tampons because I'm going around, I have them probably in my bag somewhere. Emergency tampons. So, I mix*

**User**

*Just towels.... It's just the only thing that I've felt comfortable with really*

**Non-User**

*I have just started using the Mooncup- that I've been using that with liners just to get the confidence*

**User**

*After the first couple of days, I'll just swap the Tampax into a sanitary pad*

**Non-User**

*I use a moon cup as my main thing and if I'm having a heavier day then I reinforce with sanitary pads. They are just regular ones*

**User**

*My periods are quite heavy, so I actually feel that I would just have to be changing constantly if I didn't use tampons*

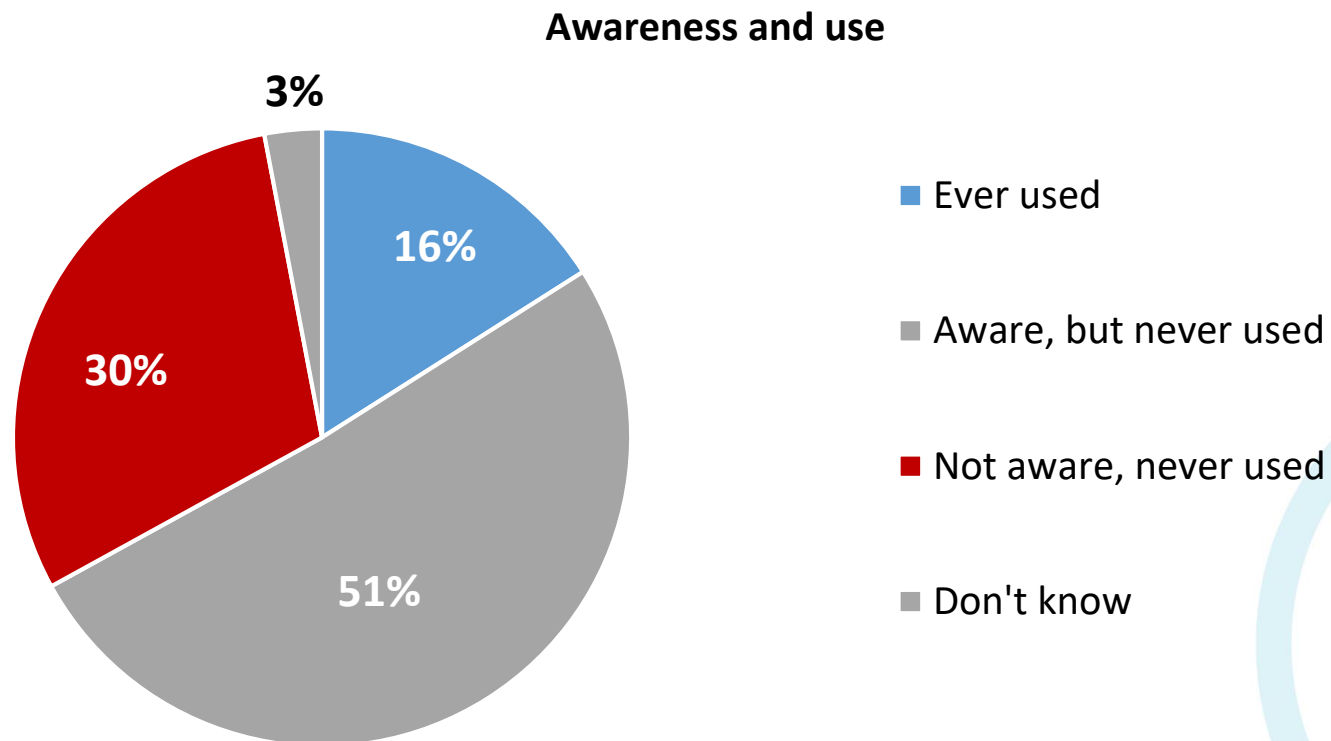
**Non-User**



# Awareness and attitudes to reusables



- Three in ten have never heard of re-usable menstrual products – and half are aware but have never used them
- There was little familiarity with re-usable products among non-users



*I've heard of the cup, it gives me the fear*

**Non-User**



# Attitudes to trying reusables



- Varied – 21% said absolutely not to any trial
- The majority of those who have never used reusables are either on board or persuadable – three quarters in total said they would consider at least one of the products (and a third would definitely)

*It looks like it would be a little jacket for a guinea pig*

**Non-user**

*If it lasts twelve hours day to day then it could be used for work but not night outs. I think it is more intriguing. I want to know what it's like*

**Non-user**

*They're not for me to be honest. The pants are not discreet in the slightest. I don't own any pants that are that size for a start. That's quite a large pair of pants for me. That pair of pants is quite bulky*

**Non-user**



# Motivators to switch

- Personal factors must be reassured first
- Free trial – 67% up for that – biggest prompt for non-users
- 27% - knowing I could cut down on waste by using them
- Non-users and users most often mention environment as the biggest benefit to switching, but it isn't the main motivator

*I think it's important to focus on easing the concerns that people might have, like what if it leaks? What if I don't like it and I waste my money? Like the concerns that I had before buying it*

**User**

*I think for me it was an added benefit I wasn't going to be creating waste*

**User**

*It's more convenient for me than changing tampons every four hours and things. You can keep it in all day*

**User**



# Barriers to switch

Main barriers were: the idea of interaction with period blood, concerns about hygiene, practical queries about use – and also low awareness

Doubts about product effectiveness, feeling products were 'not for them' and hesitation around the cost of making the change were also barriers to switching e.g. 56% worried cups would leak, worried about smell

*I can't imagine emptying a cup...  
Imagine being on a night out and  
having to empty it. Where would  
you clean it? How would you  
clean it? Would you empty it I  
don't know? There's so many  
questions*

**Non-user**

*For me it's always about  
the worst case scenario.  
In my head I think surely  
this can get stuck*

**User**

*I don't really want to put that in  
with the rest of my clothes but  
that means you're going to have  
to wash that on its own which in  
itself is bad for the environment*

**Non-User**

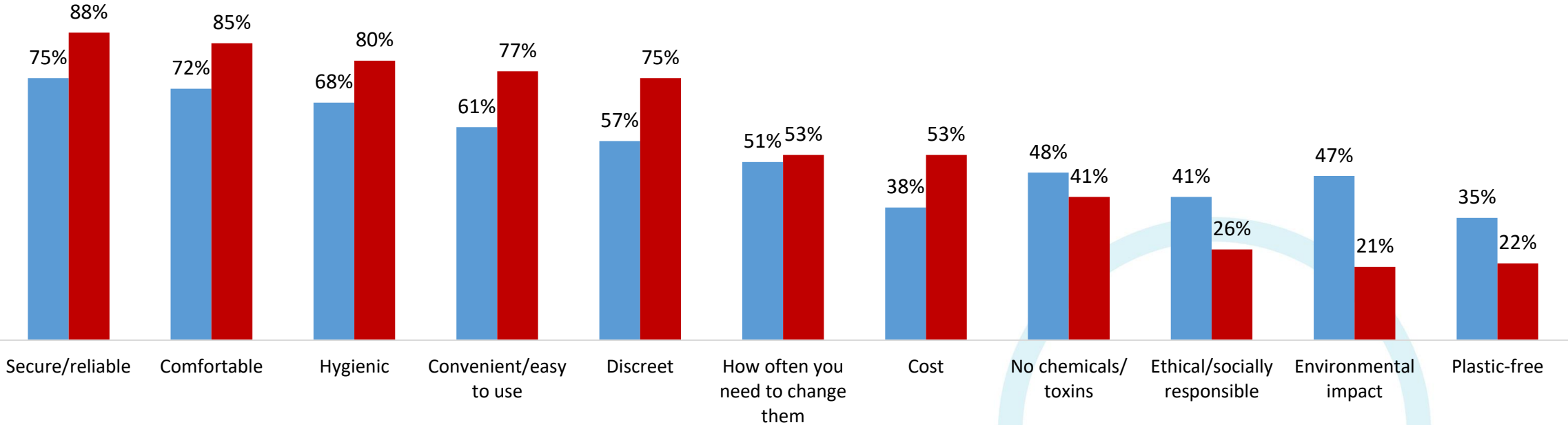


While users of reusables said environmental/social aspects were more important to them than non-users did, they still rated other personal/practical aspects as being more important (reliability, comfort, hygiene etc). Environmental benefits could help persuade people to try reusables, but potential users will need to be persuaded of these practical aspects too



% saying very important

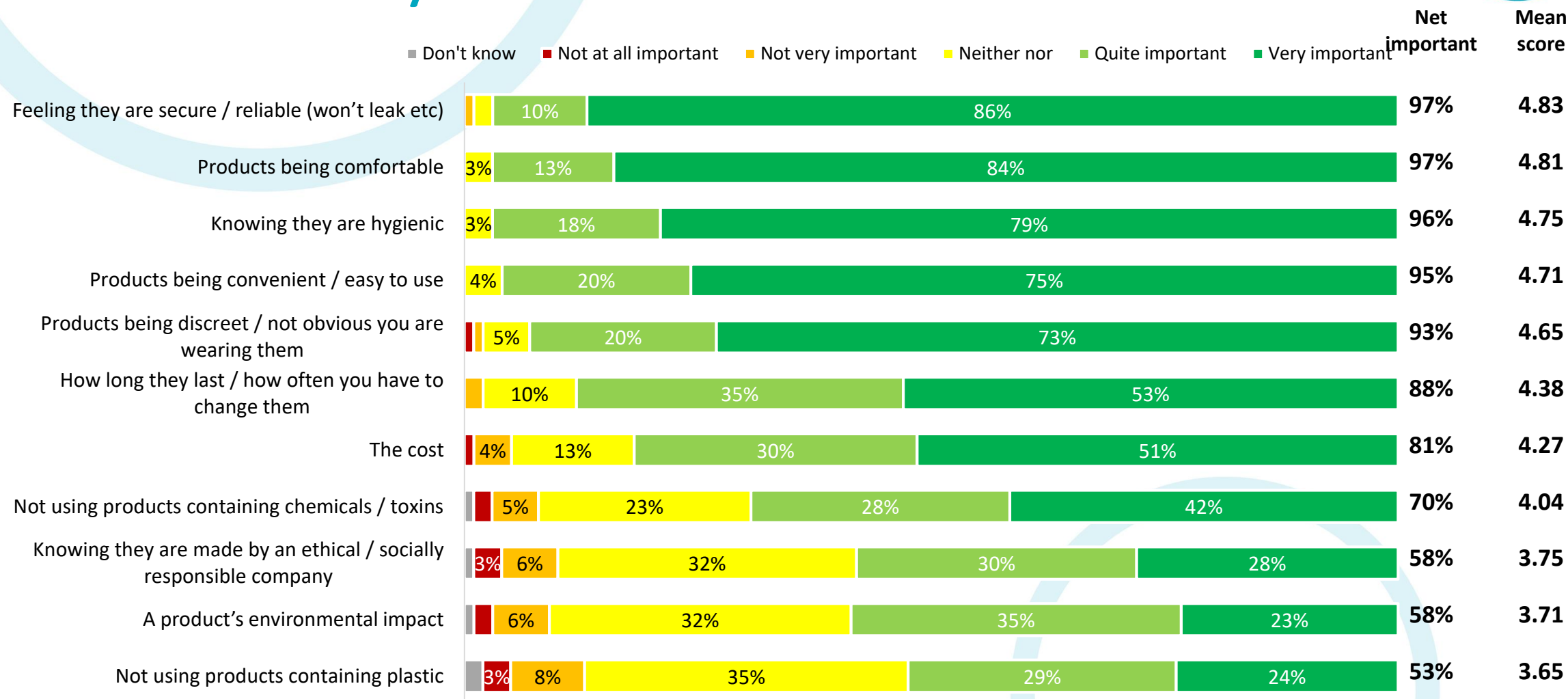
■ Currently use re-usables      ■ Do not currently use



Q13. How important are the following factors to you when choosing your sanitary/menstrual products? Base (all currently using): 103; (all not currently using): 912



# Environmental and social/ethical concerns are at the bottom of the list when choosing menstrual products – reliability, comfort, hygiene and ease of use are key



Q13. How important are the following factors to you when choosing your sanitary/menstrual products? Base (all): 1,015  
Mean scores out of 5 (1=not at all important, 5=very important)



## Students are more likely to:

- Use organic disposables (25% versus 20% sample average)
- Be aware of reusables (22% v 16% average)
- Consider at least one reusable (93% v 76% average) – less in favour of pants though
- Not reject reusables (6% v 21% average)
- Say its important menstrual products are ethical (71% v 58% average)
- Identify environment as a benefit of reusables (97% said this)



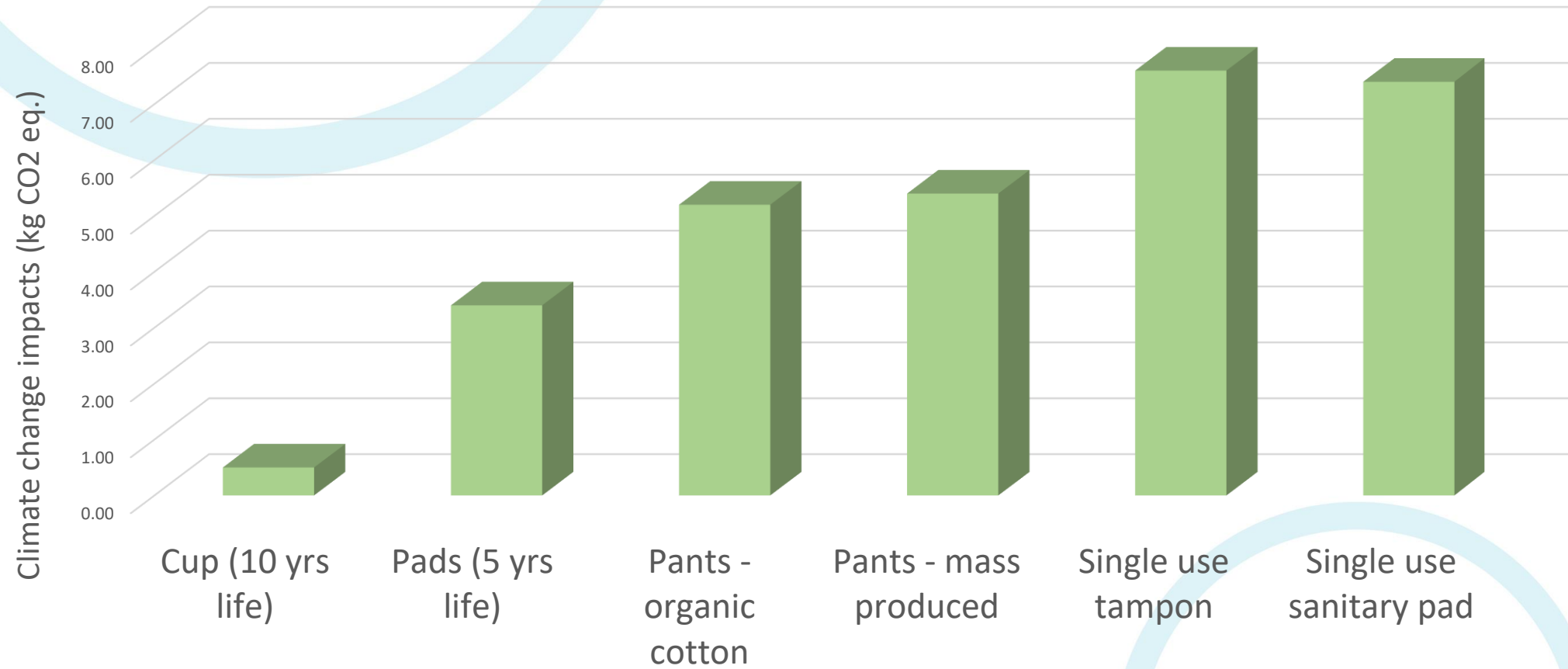
# In summary of research



- Behaviour is ingrained, 2/3 of people hadn't changed it
- The change to reusables was not an easy decision
- Peer-to-peer awareness was important for those who had changed to reusables
- Most people using reusable products also mentioned environmental factors in their decision, often described as a supporting rather than primary factor
- Environmental factors were not so important however in general product choice
- Most purchases of reusables are online and a free trial would encourage a switch
- Students most easy to convert audience



## Climate change impact of period products over one year





# Introducing the Campaign approach

- Encouraging women to give reusable menstrual products a #TrialPeriod for a more comfortable, leak-free, sustainable and hygienic period.
- Going live wk comm 11 November for four weeks
- Current stage: finalising creative assets
- Dedicated microsite [www.trialperiod.scot](http://www.trialperiod.scot) (not live yet)



# Sneak peek at creative - not completely finalised...but you get the idea



**ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND** #trialperiod

**WHY NOT TRY SWAPPING TO EASILY-REWASHABLE-FIVE-YEAR-LASTING-MONEY-SAVING-SUPER-ABSORBING-NON-BODY-IRRITATING-DISPOSABLE-DITCHING-PLANET-LOVING CLOTH MENSTRUAL PADS?**

Menstrual cup Reusable pads Period pants

Find out more at [trialperiod.scot](https://trialperiod.scot)

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**WHY NOT TRY SWAPPING TO A NON-DRYING-ONCE-A-DAY-CHANGING-NO-FUSS-MAKING-MONEY-SAVING-TEN-YEAR-LASTING-CARBON-LOWERING RE-USABLE MENSTRUAL CUP?**

Menstrual cup Reusable pads Period pants

Find out more at [trialperiod.scot](https://trialperiod.scot)

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**WHY NOT TRY SWAPPING TO A PAIR OF ALL-DAY-LEAK-RESISTING-TOTALLY-PROTECTING-SUPER-ABSORBING-STREAMLINING-PENNY-SAVING-COMFORT-GIVING-CLIMATE-HELPING RE-USABLE PERIOD PANTS?**

Menstrual cup Reusable pads Period pants


Find out more at [trialperiod.scot](https://trialperiod.scot)

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# Activities planned



- Free trial – digital sign up.
- Partnering with Hey Girls on the distribution of samples – cups and mix pack of pads. 
- National PR and digital campaign
- Field and partnership work – working with big employers and in Asda.



# How to get involved



- Follow the #TrialPeriod & @ZeroWasteScot on social media
- Use our comms toolkit to share messages
- Encourage your followers to share switch stories using the #TrialPeriod
- Incentivise the switch to reusables on campus using our posters – encouraging students who have been thinking of reusables to give it a go for #TrialPeriod
- Website [www.trialperiod.scot](http://www.trialperiod.scot)



# Thank you.



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