



Photo: Ben Cain and Tina Gverović

**In 2019, the University generated an average of 2580kg of waste per day, of which 51% was sent to be re-cycled or re-used.**

The plastics included as aggregate within *Floating Garden* represent a small fraction of the amount of waste generated.



Videos and words: Ben Cain and Tina Gverović. For a full transcript of the video click [here](#).

## On concrete:

The key problems with [concrete](#), besides the fact that it requires an enormous amount of water to make it and it's very difficult to break down, is that it's formed at very high temperatures and this process impacts massively on the environment. After the first stages of research and a really informative conversation with [Professor John Connaught](#) at the University of Reading, we understood that Limecrete, which is cooked at a much lower temperature and is generally a lot less harmful, ought to be a key ingredient in the mix that we use to form the sculpture.

Of course, alongside limecrete, sand and stones, recyclable plastics also form a high percentage of the aggregate. In the end the truth is that we've made a sculpture that doesn't 100% shift away from using harmful materials, that was not our intention. Our intention was though to make something that presents forward thinking about how we might use, re-use, and process materials in a more ethically-minded manner and according to a different type of economy.



For a full transcript of the video click [here](#).



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## **On plastics:**

We initially had a lot of different options in terms of the types of on-campus waste material we wanted to include [in the sculpture], such as bio-waste (not human), glass, paper, card... But many of these options weren't feasible because of safety concerns. We wanted to highlight invisible production in the form of waste materials that are potentially recyclable, and this eventually boiled down to plastics.

There's an idea that one of art's purposes is to hold up a mirror to society and this sculpture functions similarly in that it represents consumer activity and shows outcomes or by-products of that activity. It's also a representation and container of time, in the same way that a geological core sample is, since it presents a cross-section of human behaviour in some way.

Text excerpted from our Q&A with the artists, for the full interview click [here](#).