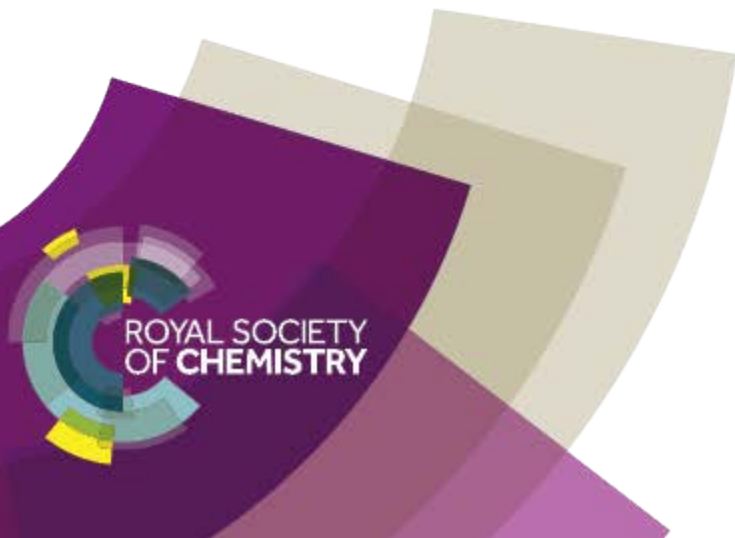


Inorganic polystyrene

Polymer plastics such as polystyrene revolutionised the 20th century. Plastics are organic compounds, which means they are carbon-based. Polystyrene can damage the environment because it doesn't break down easily.

A new process has led to a new polymer which is similar to polystyrene but inorganic. This process uses an iridium catalyst and the polymer is based on nitrogen and boron.

The new polymer could break down easier and be easier to recycle than the old polymer.



Read the full article at rsc.li/2BaoRsy, published 18 December 2017

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1. Where do the raw materials for plastics come from?
2. Explain clearly three ways that plastics can damage the environment.
3. If you were creating a new material, what properties a would you aim for, and for what purpose?
4. Think of three questions you would like scientists to answer about the new polymer. Why do you want to know this information?

