

Think before you accept another plastic bag!



SOME THOUGHT PROVOKING FACTS

The world uses 1.2 trillion plastic bags a year

On average each one is used for just 12 minutes.

On average 300 for every adult..

Every year in Britain over 13 billion single use carrier bags are distributed, over 10 bags a week for every household.

These will take hundreds of years to biodegrade.

Every ton of recycled carrier bags saves the equivalent of 11 barrels of oil.

80% marine rubbish comes off the land 90% of that is plastic

Plastic kills at least 100,000 birds, whales, seals and turtles every year.

Even after the animal dies, its body decomposes so that the plastic is released back into the environment where it can kill again.

Rebecca Hosking was inspired to make the film 'Message in the Waves' by seeing birds choking to death in a sea of discarded plastic bags. She held a dying albatros in her arms and fished a plastic bag out of the mouth of a choking 50 year old turtle.

See overleaf for what we can all do about it

Our aim on Thursday 20 March is to raise awareness of the damage plastic shopping bags do to our **environment**, on land and in the sea.

They are also an enormous waste of precious and rapidly decreasing resources: ***energy and oil.***

Traders and customers need to work together on this issue.

Ilminster is a small, friendly community ideally suited to become a town that uses few or no plastic shopping bags.

- **We can live without plastic bags!**
- Other towns no longer use plastic shopping bags - **Modbury** was the first, so please have a look at their website www.plasticbagfree.com
- **What can we use instead?**
 - cloth reusable shopping bags
 - vegetable starch bags (cornstarch)
 - paper bags
 - recycled cardboard boxes.

Each shop can use either one or a mixture of the above four to solve their bag needs.

It is now thought that **one** average cloth shopping bag in its lifetime will save the owner from using at least a **1000** plastic bags. It is also totally compostable at the end of its long life.

If customers are charged for disposable alternative bags, this dissuades us from taking them and helps cover the cost.

A **90% reduction** in the use of disposable shopping bags has resulted by charging.

Benefits to all those who live and work in Ilminster, if the town no longer uses plastic shopping bags

- Less rubbish and waste
- **Traders** save money on buying fewer bags - it has been shown that they have not suffered financially by not supplying plastic bags.
- People interested in this important issue will come to Ilminster to shop.
- In *Modbury* the praise from customers has substantially out-weighed the complaints and has left the traders feeling justly proud of what they have achieved.

**We can make it happen in
*Ilminster***

This initiative is being led by **South Somerset Climate Action**, supported by ***View from Ilminster.***

If you would like to become involved in making Ilminster a plastic-bag-free town please contact us via our website www.southsomersetclimateaction.org.uk