

## Plastic Bag Charge to Increase to 10p

### What is the problem with plastic?

- Plastic does not break down easily. This means that it can take hundreds of years to rot.
- Some of this plastic will end up in our oceans where animals may mistake it for food.

All shops in England will soon be required to charge people 10p for a **single-use** plastic bag. This is an attempt by the government to reduce the amount of single-use plastic that people use.

The measure will come in on 21st May and includes shops of all sizes. The government thinks the increased price will remind people to bring their own bags to the shops.

The government originally brought in a charge of 5p per bag in England back in 2015 for all large supermarkets. This led to a drop in the use of single-use plastic bags of 95%!

According to the government, the average person in England now buys four plastic bags a year from the main supermarkets. This has reduced from 140 in 2014.

The group 'Wrap' carried out a survey. They found that a **majority** of people were in support of the increase. The survey involved 2000 people and 73% were in favour of the higher charge.

Rebecca Pow is an environment minister. She said, "We know we must go further to protect our natural environment and oceans, which is why we are now extending this charge to all businesses."

It is not just the government trying to solve the problem of plastic waste in shops.

Sainsbury's and ASDA have increased the price of their 'bags for life' to 20p. This is to



Photo: Plastic waste.

encourage people to reuse them.

The Co-op has said that they will stop selling plastic 'bags for life' altogether. If shoppers have forgotten to bring a bag, they will be offered a **compostable** bag. This can be reused to put vegetable peelings in to turn food waste into compost.

Morrisons already stopped selling plastic bags in their stores altogether. Instead, they are selling paper alternatives designed for single-use. They also offer longer-life bags made from natural materials, such as **jute**.

So, with all these ideas about how to reduce the amount of plastic we use, do you think the solution is in the bag?

### Glossary

<b>single-use</b>	Something that is designed to be used once.
<b>majority</b>	The biggest number.
<b>compostable</b>	Materials that will break down and rot.
<b>jute</b>	A rough fibre made from a plant.