

International News

- Ireland has placed a levy on plastic bags. Oh, no, that was in **2002**
- The Welsh environment minister proposed that a 15p levy be placed on plastic bags. But that was **June 2009**.
- 9 Jan **2008** ... The Chinese government announces a crackdown on **plastic bags**, in a bid to cut pollution and save resources. (BBC News)
- It looks as though Australia will be banning plastic bags state by state. South Australia has become the first to ban them, on 4 May **2009**, but other states are pushing to join

National News

Sorry, none. The UK government is still relying on voluntary action to reduce takeup of single use bags. Why?

Local news

GreeneruponThames supporters are still out there, working on the campaign to get the government to bring in a levy on single use bags.

We know it's not the most important threat to life on this planet – what with climate change, overpopulation, war and disease. It is, in the great scheme of things, maybe quite small. But we can do it, and we should do it.

Here are a few words from Karen, who collected pledges from 90 shops in Sheen, to ask customers if they need a plastic bag, and to reuse plastic bags:

“The majority of the businesses I spoke to thought this was a good idea ..., from the businesses I spoke to, this is a well supported and well considered thing to do.”

And also from the manager of Kingston Branch TKMaxx, which has a policy since last year to charge for plastic bags:

“You have to explain to some customers why we're charging, but we have reduced usage by 70%”

A personal view

As you grow older, you recognise that you won't be a hero. You won't climb Everest, or be a famous ballerina or invent the cure for the common cold. You accept that the most you can do is live a decent life, try to bring up your children with a moral compass, give them more than you had and prepare them for a future you can't envisage.

What I really hate is the fact that my most enduring legacy will be the plastic bags I brought home from the supermarket, the yogurt pots and the bread wrappers. That they will be there for centuries after I'm gone, polluting the seas, releasing their toxic chemicals into the food chain and causing harm where I had only hoped to do good.

We're not giving up and neither should you.

GreeneruponThames continues to campaign. We welcome your support.

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*Greener upon Thames is:
Barnes Community Association, ESBRA, Richmond Business & Retail Association, Friends of Richmond Green,
Kew Society, Ham United Group, Ham Retail Association, Richmond Society, Greener Kingston,
Richmond Council, Sea Shepherds, Richmond Environment Network,
and a growing number (20+) of schools across the borough*