

Towns trial blanket ban on plastic bags

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Shoppers are being urged to do their bit to combat plastic pollution by supporting the first Plastic Bag Free Day tomorrow.

Some 140 towns and communities across the country have declared themselves carrier-free following negotiations with local businesses.

The day has been organised by the Marine Conservation Society, which is encouraging shoppers to take reusable bags with them.



Banish the bags: Some 140 towns are going carrier-free tomorrow

The society hopes to draw attention to how going plastic bag free can prevent harm to wildlife, such as turtles and whales - as well as reducing litter.

Marine animals eat plastic bags, which can block their digestive systems and may cause them to starve to death.

Plastic bags are used for an average of just 20 minutes before being thrown out. Many cause a litter blight while others are dumped in landfill sites where they can take up to 1,000 years to rot away.



Mail campaign: Launched in February 2008, it's helped reduce the number of carrier bags given out by shops

The 2008 MCS Beachwatch litter survey found 8,174 plastic bags littering UK beaches on just one weekend.

Rachel Bailey, MCS litter projects officer, said: 'Plastic bags are one of the most dangerous litter items in the marine environment. We need as many people as possible to take part to make the day a success and to show that one of the most preventable forms of plastic litter can easily be stopped.'

The Daily Mail's Banish The Bags campaign launched in February last year has helped reduce the number of throwaway plastic carriers given out by shops. Around 418million fewer are being handed out each year.

And there is evidence that the introduction of charging for plastic bags has cut use by more than 80 per cent. Some countries, most notably China, have implemented a complete ban on the throwaway bags. China saved three million tonnes of oil in the first year of its ban.

Find this story at www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1212627/Towns-trial-blanket-ban-plastic-bags.html

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