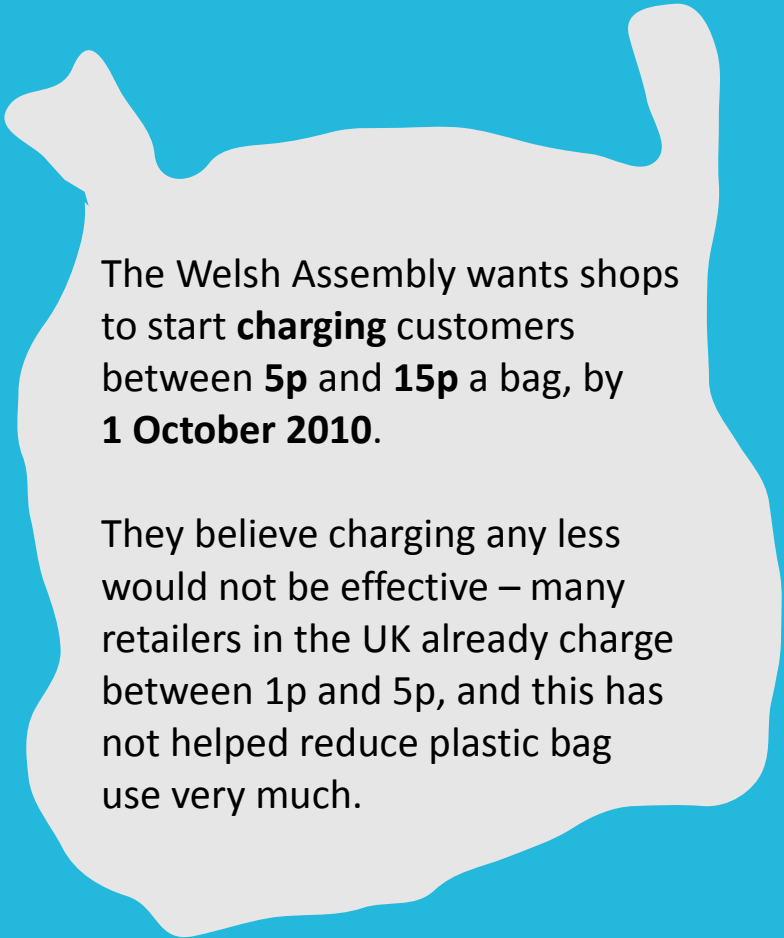


Charging for carrier bags

in Wales



The Welsh Assembly wants shops to start **charging** customers between **5p** and **15p** a bag, by **1 October 2010**.

They believe charging any less would not be effective – many retailers in the UK already charge between 1p and 5p, and this has not helped reduce plastic bag use very much.

This charge would be for all sorts of bags, **except** the **reusable bags** that most supermarkets sell these days.

What about other types of bag?

The Assembly has decided against encouraging people to use any other sort of bag, like:

- **Paper bags**

Making paper bags damages the environment even more than a plastic bag, they take up more space in landfills and are heavier so taking them to recycling plants is more expensive.

- **Degradable plastic bags**

Like current plastic carrier bags they are made from oil, which wastes a precious resource and oil production has massive environmental side effects. They also take a very long time to degrade, and are more difficult to pick up as litter because they split into little pieces.

- **Plastic bags**

As above they have a big environmental impact because of what they are made from, and also cause pollution, can block drains causing flooding, and are an eyesore.

Will all retailers have to do this?

They want you to **tell them** who should not have to charge for plastic bags, for example **pharmacies** should still be able to use them so that people can't tell what medicines people are collecting.

Plastic **collection bags** from **charity shops** could also be exempt.

However, the Assembly wants most retailers, from big **chains** to **clothes** shops and **market stalls** to start charging for carrier bags.

How should retailers do this?

The Assembly wants local **Trading Standards** to work out how companies can start charging for bags by working with them.

They suggest that as well as charging for carrier bags, retailers should keep a record of:

- **How many** bags they sell
- **How much** they make from selling bags
- **What they do** with the money they make selling bags

The first point is so they can track whether less bags are being used.

The last two points are because the Assembly wants retailers to use the money they make from selling carrier bags to help the environment. This could mean that the money goes to an independent organisation that then spreads the money out around suitable green projects.

The Assembly wants retailers to sign up to a Voluntary Code of Practice to make sure the money goes where it should.

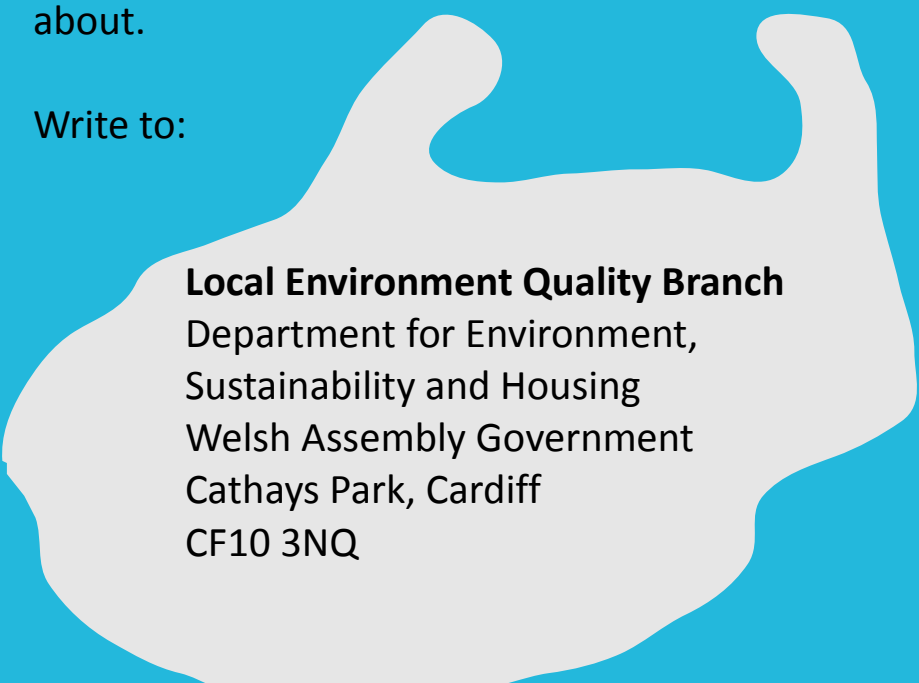
They also want Trading Standards to collect all the records from retailers, and if they don't keep records properly they can give them a **fixed penalty** fine and recover the costs of helping them comply with the law.

How do I have my say on carrier bags in Wales?

You can [email the LEQ](#), or write to the address below with your thoughts on this consultation on carrier bags. The deadline is **21 September 2009**.

The Assembly want you to use [this form](#) – but you don't have to answer all the questions, just the ones you care about.

Write to:



Local Environment Quality Branch
Department for Environment,
Sustainability and Housing
Welsh Assembly Government
Cathays Park, Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

This has been another entirely unofficial, but hopefully jargon-free translation from [Simply Understand](#).