

SPECIAL REPORT CARRIER BAGS

HAVE WE HAD OUR LANDFILL?

► The vote to ban free plastic bags for shoppers opens new debate on eco-issue

BY GEOFF COWART

LONDON'S council leaders have voted to ban free plastic carrier shopping bags in the capital.

The November vote follows a London-wide consultation asking residents about either a levy or a ban on the bags.

With news that the average person uses 220 bags a year and that the disposable menaces take over 400 years to break down in a landfill, the organisation of leaders from boroughs across the capital, London Councils, have lobbied for their ban.

The bill is now being debated in Parliament.



ON THE MARCH: Most plastic carrier bags are used only once PICTURE BY JUSTIN THOMAS

LONDON CALLING
FOR London, a conservative figure based on population size would indicate we use at least 1.6 billion bags per year – although the number of tourists in the capital suggests that this figure is probably much higher.

Peter Robinson, director of environmental organisation Waste Watch, reacted to the vote by saying: "We've seen successful action taken on carrier bags all across the world from Australia to Zanzibar, and now it's time for London to take a lead on this issue."

"Like the vast majority of Londoners, we want to see a massive reduction in disposable carrier bags going to landfill."

Over 90 per cent of people responding to the consultation called for action on shopping bags.

And nearly 60 per cent felt strongly enough to call for an outright ban.

WHAT YOU SAID

IN October, we asked readers to take part in the London Councils survey.

In response, we received scores of emails from local residents offering us their views on the issue.

Some went as far as **Vivien Morgan**, who has proposed a ban on plastic bags in Hammersmith's King Street shopping district.

Vivien wrote: "Recently, a check-out lady in Sainsbury's got me thinking."

"There she was sitting

with a badge on saying 're-use plastic bags'.

"When I asked her not to put my things in a bag as I had a basket, I inquired whether she asked customers to think about doing the same."

"No", she replied, "You can't change the world. It's always been like this."

"I told her that I thought she was wrong."

"I think the council and people prepared to help should begin a campaign to ban plastic bags."

"You could start by offering alternatives at the farmer's market and then get the main retailers to take part and sponsor cotton bags for sale."

"Hammersmith has some very large organisations, which would surely be interested in adding their logos to bags (L'Oreal, Sony Ericsson, Disney and Coca-Cola)?"

Meanwhile, **Daniel Tills** supports an outright ban on plastic bags in the UK.

"I can hardly believe that councils and the Government are so weak in their approach to a solution," he writes.

"We need to be radical about this!"

"Most people seem to turn a blind eye to the mountains of

discarded bags in this country, but I am horrified at my own mini-mountain of the things in my own cupboard despite my best efforts to avoid them."

"I think that plastic carrier bags should be banned outright."

"Charging for them will not stop shoppers who prefer instead to 'buy' their way out of damaging the environment."

But not all *h&f news* readers were impressed with the idea of banning the bags or taxing shoppers.

Linda Stemp says: "This whole debate is totally ludicrous."

"It's another example (like the C-charge) of deciding that there is a problem. But instead of sorting it out, here's an idea... let's just charge people to do it."

"Let the shopkeepers sort out this one and absorb the costs – not the poor consumer."

"What's wrong with going back to plain brown bags?"

"They are completely recyclable."

"Besides, if consumers did not have such massive amounts of packaging to deal with, we would not need so many bags."

"Anyway, is there some

alternative to getting your purchased goods home?"

"If there is, maybe you should be publicising it."

"And I don't mean the trendy, eco-friendly canvas bags that are currently being forced down our collective throats."

"Are we supposed to be walking around with three or four of these at any given time just in case we decide to buy a few things?"

"How will paying for the bags make them any more recyclable?"

CARRY THE BURDEN

BUT the overwhelming message from our loyal readers is that it's time to ban the carrier bag culture, once and for all.

"Yes," exclaims **Wendy Cole**. "Shoppers should be discouraged from using plastic bags."

"Shops should also be encouraged to switch to paper bags, like Primark stores in Ireland."

"Instead, people should be encouraged to carry their own bags, as in days of yore!"

She was supported by **Philippa Prior**, who writes: "Be brave – ban them!"

"Something drastic needs to happen."

"So let's have the courage to be a flagship and forward-thinking borough and make it unlawful for shoppers to use new plastic bags."

"Everyone wins. You know it makes sense!"

CHEMISTS

The following pharmacies will be open for the provision of NHS Pharmaceutical Services on week days until at least 7pm:

ABC Drugstore
Monday-Saturday
9am-7pm
5 Regal Centre
402 North End Road,
Fulham SW6
020 7381 0017

ABC Drugstore
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm; Saturday
9am-1pm 117-121 Wandsworth
Bridge Road, Fulham, SW6 2TZ
020 7736 2962

Babylon Health
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
57 Uxbridge Rd, Hammersmith
W12 8NP
020 8749 0037

Boots the Chemist
Monday-Friday 7.30am-8pm
Saturday 9am-7pm
Unit 31-32 Hammersmith Broadway
centre, Hammersmith W6 9YD
020 8563 7873

Boots the Chemist
Monday-Friday 8.30am-7pm
43 King Street, Hammersmith
W6 9HW
020 8748 7627

Boots the Chemist
Monday-Saturday 7.30am-11pm
Unit 7, Fulham Broadway
Retail Centre, Fulham
SW6 1BH
020 7385 4762

Barons Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 10am-4pm
3 Margravine Gardens,
Hammersmith W6 8RL
020 8743 6330

Caregrange Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 12am-5pm
9 Goldhawk Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 8QQ
020 8740 9443

Fontain Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 8am-7pm
Saturday 9am-6pm
290 Munster Road,
Fulham SW6 6BQ
020 7385 0355

Forrest & Co
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9am-2pm
67 Blythe Road,
West Kensington W14 0HP
020 7603 2493

Fulham Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9.30am-6pm
608 Fulham Road, SW6 5RP
020 7736 4126

Gate Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 8.30am-7pm
Saturday 9am-6pm
Richmond Gate, Richmond Street,
Hammersmith W6 7HY
020 8237 2367

Goldstrands Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9am-6pm
780 Fulham Road,
Fulham, SW6 5SL
020 7736 3034

Kanari Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9.30am-5.30pm
682-684 Fulham Road,
Fulham SW6 5SA
020 7731 5587

Morrisons Pharmacy
Monday-Saturday 8am-9pm
Morrisons Store, 114-116
Concorde Centre,
Shepherds Bush W12 8PH
020 8743 6296

Oza Chemist
Monday-Friday 9pm-7pm
Saturday 9am-5pm
9 Fulham Broadway
Fulham SW6 1AA
020 7385 9156

Parmay Pharmacy
Monday-Saturday 9am-7pm
122-124 North End Road,
West Kensington W14 9PP
020 7381 4376

Pestle & Mortar
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
388 Uxbridge Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 7PA
020 8743 3535

Pestle & Mortar
Monday-Saturday 9am-7pm
59 South Africa Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 7LL
020 8749 6844

Tesco Pharmacy
Monday-Friday 8am-8pm
Saturday 9am-2pm
180 Shepherds Bush Road,
Hammersmith W6 7NL
020 7853 7749

Windwood Chemist
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
96 Askew Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 9BL
020 8743 3562

The following pharmacies will be open for the provision of NHS Pharmaceutical Services on Sundays and Bank Holidays between 10.30am and noon:

Parmay Pharmacy
122-124 North End Road,
West Kensington W14 9PP
020 7381 4376
October 7, November 11,
December 16, January 1,
February 3, March 9 & 24

CE Harrod
207 New Kings Road,
Fulham SW6 4SR
020 7736 2174
October 14, November 18,
December 23, January 6,
February 10, March 2 & 30

Barons Pharmacy
3 Margravine Gardens,
Hammersmith W6 8RL
020 8748 6330
October 21, November 25,
December 9 & 30, January 13,
February 17, March 16

Babylon Health Ltd.
57 Uxbridge Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 8NP
020 8749 0037
October 28, November 4,
December 2 & 25, January 20,
February 24, March 21

Boots the Chemist
43 King Street,
Hammersmith W6 9HW
020 8748 7627
December 26, January 1, March 23

The following Non-Rota pharmacies are normally open on Sundays:

ABC Drugstore
5 Regal Centre
402 North End Road,
Fulham SW6
020 7381 0017
Open Sundays 10am-4pm

Boots the Chemist
43 King Street,
Hammersmith W6 9HW
020 8748 7627
Open Sundays 11am-5pm

Boots the Chemist
31-32 Hammersmith
Broadway Centre,
Hammersmith W6 9YD
020 8563 7873
Open Sundays 11am-5pm

Boots the Chemist
Unit 7, Fulham Broadway Retail
Centre, Fulham SW6 1BH
020 7385 4762
Open Sundays 11.30am-5.30pm

Morrisons Pharmacy
114-116 Concorde Centre,
Shepherds Bush W12 8PH
020 8743 6296
Open Sundays***11am-5pm

Pestle & Mortar
388 Uxbridge Road,
Shepherds Bush W12 7LL
020 873 3535
Open Sundays
10am-2pm

Tesco Instore Pharmacy
Brook Green, 180 Shepherds Bush
Road, Hammersmith W6 7NL
020 7853 7749
Open Sundays*** 11am-5pm
*** This pharmacy not open on
Easter Sunday (23 March 2008)

HAVE YOUR SAY

Email: handfnews@lbhf.gov.uk