

Scotland confirms carrier bag charges

The Scottish Government has confirmed plans to introduce a minimum carrier bag charge in 2014, in a bid to reduce bag use in the country.

Money raised by the levy, which will sit at a minimum of five pence per bag, will be donated to charity. Scotland follows in the footsteps of Wales and Northern Ireland which introduced bag levies in 2011 and April this year, respectively.

The move has been generally welcomed by Scottish retailers. Responding to the announcement, Scottish Retail Consortium director Fiona Moriarty said: "Working with our customers we have succeeded in reducing carrier bag usage by over 40%. The Scottish Government has decided that it wants further and faster reductions and the only way it can achieve this is through legislation. However, it is our view that if we focus solely on plastic bags we are in danger of being distracted from much larger and more important issues around waste."