



Topic Support Network: Waste Management
Wednesday 21st May 2014
University of Edinburgh 10.30am – 2.30pm [webpage](#)

Attendees:

Sandie	Whigham	(SW)	University of Edinburgh
Sophie	Rippinger	(SR)	University of Edinburgh
Alan	Peddie	(AP)	University of Edinburgh
Trudy	Cunningham	(TC)	University of Dundee
Mark	Lindsay	(ML)	University of Strathclyde
Andrew	Baillie	(AB)	University of Strathclyde
Andrew	Anderson	(AA)	APUC
John	Gilmour	(JG)	Biffa Waste Management
Neil	Purdom	(NP)	Resource Efficient Scotland
Fleur	Ruckley	(FR)	University of Edinburgh
Steven	Turnbull	(ST)	Resource Efficient Scotland
William	Close	(WC)	University of St Andrews
Barbara	Aitken	(BA)	University of St Andrews
Hanna	Plant	(HP)	EAUC

1.	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p><i>Fleur Ruckley and Trudy Cunningham, Waste Management Topic Support Network convenors</i></p> <p>Thanks to Ann Gilbraith as the previous convenor of this Topic Support Network. Participants were welcomed and thanked for coming. Remember that the network is there for you and it's important that you guide the format and the content of these sessions.</p>
2.	<p>The Single Use Carrier Bags Charge (Scotland) Regulations 2014</p> <p>http://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2014/9780111023211</p> <p><i>Neil Purdom, Zero Waste Scotland</i></p> <p>Presentation available here.</p> <p>TC has managed to haggle the cost of cotton bags down from 99p to 67p. Haggling can work with the companies who provide the bags. TC is happy to share quotes she has been given for cotton bags.</p> <p>The carrier bag charge in Scotland is due to be formally introduced on the 20th October 2014. All single-use carrier bags will come with a minimum 5p charge per bag. A similar scheme in Wales has been hugely successful in driving down use of plastic bags by 75% since its introduction. There has been some confusion on what counts as a single-use bag eligible for the charge and those that are exempt of the charge. Please see the presentation above for clarification. For instance, a brown paper bag is classified as a single use bag and so eligible for the charge.</p>

Two key points from video/discussion

- The regulations are still in draft and will not be formally passed into law until June 2014.
- This charge applies to ALL* single use bags of a certain size and gauge irrespective of their material composition.
- * There are exemptions to the charge:
 - a. Promotional bags (i.e. bags with items inside that are given for free, not sold) are exempt from the charge i.e. prospectus bags given out at university/college open days.
 - b. 'Bags for life' from shops like Tescos, if damaged, can be taken back to the shop and replaced for free.
 - c. Small bags containing uncooked food, fresh fruit and veg, sweets or prescriptions/ behind the pharmacy counter items, are exempt from the charge.
- Any organisation/ company with over 10 employees have to keep records of all monies collected from the charge and bags sold. Data has to be kept for at least 3 years. There is support from ZWS to assist with the administration of this, resources of which are available on the Carrier Bag Charge Website here and further details in the presentation above. All data can also be stored on carrier bag website so that retailers don't have to use their local storage and data will be secure.
- The FAQs on the website is a live document and will be updated as more questions come in. Please email enquiries@carrierbagscotlandcharge.org.uk should you have any further questions on the charge.
- RES also have a voluntary agreement online: the "Carrier Bag Commitment" and sector specific guidance on exemptions.

Resources and notes from discussion Q&A

Resources

Website: <http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/>

Retailer Guidance:

http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/includes/resources/Retailer_Guidance_FINAL_280514.pdf

Carrier Bag Commitment:

http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/includes/uploads/ZWS432_Carrier_Bag_commitment_factsheet_V2.pdf

Retailer Communications materials (inc training video):

<http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/resources/>

Questions asked:

Q: Are body bags – the type used for animals – covered by the charge?

A: These would be exempt as considered specialist bags

Q: Will visitor centres and gift shops be exempt, as they have fewer than 10 staff?

A: The staffing requirement refers to the business as a whole, not the individual elements, i.e. the University <http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/guidance/recording-information/> Paragraphs 4 & 5

Q: What about Student Unions, which are separate from the University and have less than 10 staff employed in shops?

A: The requirement covers all staff, not just those on the retail side.

Q: How does the charge apply to online shopping?

A: The charge could be applied to an estimate of the bags that would be used, or the actual number of bags used. Including a 'no bag' option at the checkout is possible. The use of boxes would not be covered by the charge. <http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/guidance/when-to-charge/> paragraph 12

Q: What about items that come in sealed plastic bags, such as lab coats and t-shirts?

A: These would be exempt as the bags would be considered primary packaging. If the products were removed from the bags for display and returned after sale, this would still be exempt (to be checked). However, if they were removed and then returned to a new single use bag, the charge would apply.

Q: Would the purchase of rolls of bags be charged?

A: No, these are exempt as the bags are not intended for retail purposes.

Q: Are cotton bags covered by the charge?

A: No, as these are intended for multiple usage.

Q: Some sites have promotions from external companies, who flood a campus with carrier bags containing flyers or discount vouchers for products; are these exempt?

A: Yes, promotional materials are exempt as no purchase is involved. However, if goods were purchased and provided in a bag that contained a flyer, it would be chargeable. <http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/guidance/when-to-charge/> paragraph 11

Q: Are bags specifically for birthday cakes – to ensure they stay upright – covered?

A: It would depend on the size of the bags, but they might also be considered specialist and therefore exempt (awaiting clarification).

Q: Are pop-up shops covered by the legislation?

A: The legislation applies to the retailer, not the location, so yes.

Q: What is the impact on the issue of bags for items that must legally be carried in one, e.g. bottles of alcohol?

A: These would still be covered by the charge, as the bottle or can would be considered the primary packaging.

Q: Who is responsible for the charge if purchasing through an online shop, but provided by a third party?

A: If the third party is supplying direct, they are. If they are fulfilling an order, you are.

Q: Some organic fruit and veg is delivered loose in string bags intended for re-use – are these chargeable?

A: No, these have a double exemption – firstly, the bag is intended to be re-used; and secondly, the product is loose/unsealed.

Existing stocks of NEW Single Use Carrier Bags are subject to the charge if supplied to the customer. Re-used carrier bags (I.E. NOT NEW) can be supplied without charge- They will have been charged for previously at original point of use.

<http://carrierbagchargescotland.org.uk/guidance/when-to-charge/> (paragraph 8)

3.

Food waste recycling –members experiences & practices

SR and SW gave a presentation on University of Edinburgh’s experience with food waste. Presentation available here and video made on engaging students with food waste at the University available here.

See picture of discussion points on the website [here](#).

Key points from discussion:

- Good to keep your coffee grounds separate as they weigh a lot, are wet and can be given to students/ staff for their gardens however uptake of this from Dundee’s experience is limited.
- A big issue is use of polystyrene packaging for food at Dundee SU. They refuse to change due to extra costs of Vegware packaging.
- Actual popcorn can be used as packaging for delicate items. The Bodyshop and Lush are two companies that have been known to use popcorn rather than polystyrene. It’s cheaper and more environmentally friendly. Suppliers can be asked for such a change.
- Some companies will also provide a ‘post-back’ service of packaging. Important we should be challenging suppliers to provide such a service.
- You can ask a contractor to pick up packaging from items delivered and have it agreed as the conditions of contract for pick-up to be on a specified date. APUC can specify this as an issue to contractors to encourage them to start providing such a service.
- Polystyrene could be raised as a future topic for the next TSN. AA from APUC and ST from RES to investigate recycling options.

Vegware packaging: there are now a ‘de-packaging’ process before any food-waste goes into the Anaerobic Digestion plant, which means that all Vegware packaging (which is bio-degradable) is getting chucked out of the process too and thus going to landfill. This makes Vegware redundant

	<p>and a waste of money to invest in. UoE have stopped using bio-bags with food waste too as a result of this de-packaging process. FR showed a short video produced by the UoE SRS office about a collaboration project on engaging students in food waste recycling. Video available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0WiyCIGQXk.</p>
4.	<p>Networking Lunch</p>
5.	<p>MRF's explained – what they take and where it goes?</p> <p><i>Presentation from John Gilmour, Biffa Waste Management</i></p> <p>Presentation available with contact details included here.</p> <p>John Gilmour gave a presentation about Materials Recovery Facilities – what they take, what they do with it and where each stream goes. John also talked about the need for quality in co-mingled streams with the tolerance for contamination going down rather than up following the change in regulations in January and China's "Green Fence" policy regards the quality of imports of recyclate into China. Developments in MRFs have resulted in increases in mechanical / technological sorting with human beings used more for quality checks.</p> <p>Discussion after was around what different Universities were doing in order to meet their obligations. Some were moving to co-mingled and others away from it (for example Strathclyde).</p>
6.	<p>Discussion on disposal of manure waste</p> <p><i>Presentation from Julian Bell, SAC Consulting, SRUC</i></p> <p>Presentation with contact details available here.</p> <p>Julian's talk was around the recovery of energy from manure and biomass using a variety of means. Julian gave a summary of the AD process and an indication of the size at which such plants are viable and the viability of different fuels (e.g. manures, biomass, food crops). He also gave a summary of the regulations regards what the fuel is, where it comes from and output. SAC/SRUC is currently investigating crops that can be grown in Scotland and which do not threaten food production. Julian handed out a booklet produced by SRUC called "Farming and Water in Scotland".</p>
7.	<p>Next Meeting Autumn/ Winter 2014.</p> <p>Possible areas for future discussion – Waste Framework next steps, pollution incident planning, packaging – take back, innovation, etc. Please forward your ideas to Hanna, Trudy or Fleur. Also are there any site visits that the members would like the TSN to arrange? E.g. an AD plant or a MRF plant are 2 possible suggestions. Please email hplant@eauc.org.uk with any suggestions or requests.</p>