

SUSSEX VILLAGE GOES PLASTIC BAG FREE - HENFIELD

Submitted by: Oakfield Media

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'FANTASTIC, NO PLASTIC' IS HENFIELD SLOGAN ON MAY 3

HENFIELD, a thriving village in West Sussex, joins the small but increasing number of communities to go plastic bag free on Saturday May 3 at 11am.

On that date 40-plus of the village's retail outlets will stop giving out plastic carrier bags, using environmentally friendly alternatives instead.

A well-known personality will launch the "no plastic" drive in Henfield High Street at 11am, followed by street entertainment and a tour of the shops participating.

A small group representing traders and the Henfield Community Partnership has led the campaign.

(www.plasticbagfreehenfield.co.uk)

Tony Jackson, chairman of the group said, "We were inspired by the example Modbury in Devon set nearly a year ago and wanted to show that people in Henfield also cared about the environment.

"Ridding the country of plastic bags is an issue where local action can really make a difference. Already we are seeing more and more residents are bringing their own bags and refusing to take a plastic bag."

To encourage everyone to bring bags with them when shopping, each household has been given a free reusable cotton bag with an eye-catching image on the front, designed by local freelance designer Helen Boosey.

Leading High Street trader John Willis, who owns two shops, said: "I feel that our planet has been sadly abused and urgent action is needed to prevent permanent damage to our environment. Responsibility starts here, with us all, and Henfield's plastic bag free campaign recognises this."

Businesses have agreed to stop issuing plastic bags which will save at least 10,000 per week. Budgens, the village's local independently-owned supermarket and biggest user of plastic bags, has enthusiastically embraced the campaign. Manager Nick Ward said: "We have long felt that plastic bags were unnecessary and this is our way of showing that traders can do their bit for the environment".

As a result of this campaign, Henfield hopes to stop using at least half a million plastic bags a year, making a positive difference to the environment.

www.plasticbagfreehenfield.co.uk

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

1. Henfield has a population of about 5 600 and is situated about 10 miles north of Brighton & Hove, near the South Downs.
2. Funding for the campaign has come from: West Sussex County Council, Horsham District Council, Henfield Parish Council, West Sussex Chanctonbury Local Committee, and Budgens.
3. Before the start of the campaign, shops in Henfield issued approaching 15,000 plastic bags a week.
4. Over its lifetime, one cotton bag will save the use of 1,000 plastic bags.
5. Cotton bags have been obtained from Clever Baggers based in Welshpool. The version given free to householders is also on sale in local shops for 65p, with a stronger, bigger canvas one for £1.75.
6. Henfield Community Partnership Ltd is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. It was set up in July 2005 with the aims of implementing the actions in the Henfield Parish Plan, and of working on issues and projects of interest and concern to the community. Its membership includes volunteers, who are in the majority, and representatives from local councils. The current chairman is Tony Jackson.
7. A dedicated website has been set up for the campaign:

www.plasticbagfreehenfield.co.uk

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PICTURE CAPTION: The cotton bag being given to Henfield residents. Design: Helen Boosey
(www.helenboosey.co.uk)

Picture: Emma Osman (www.bn5intouch.co.uk)