

Media Release

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## Breaking our Bag habits

New bag swap stations in local supermarkets aim to help shoppers who forget to bring their own reusable bags.

Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers have been working with local retailers to establish the initiative.

“We are helping our community avoid using plastic bags, especially for that quick ‘couple of things’ shop”, said Robyn Charlton, a Board Member of the Sustainable Neighbourhood Alliance. “It’s a simple system. You can take a bag from the station and bring it back next time you shop here.”

Customers are also encouraged to donate their spare, clean, reusable shopping bags for others to use.

The bag swap stations are now in the Blackalls Park Friendly Grocer, the Boolaroo IGA, and various shops at Redhead Village. Sustainable Neighbourhood volunteers are hoping to set up more around the City. “With the recent announcement about plastic bags from the big supermarkets, its important that we help make the transition as widespread and as smooth as possible”, said Ms Charlton.

Local retailers have been very supportive, and were keen to be involved. Ash Sharma, the manager at Blackalls Park Friendly Grocer said, “Our customers have been very appreciative of the spare reusable bags.” “We like being able to offer an alternative to a plastic bag, and we know that our local wildlife and marine animals will benefit.”

The bag swap stations are part of a campaign by Sustainable Neighbourhood groups to encourage alternatives to plastic bags. Volunteers have held a range of education activities, and hosted the first Lake Macquarie Boomerang Bags sewing workshop in June.

You can join the nearly 300 Lake Mac residents who volunteer for their local Sustainable Neighbourhood group. Find out about their initiatives and how you can get involved at [sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au](http://sustainableneighbourhoods.org.au).

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