

## **Will a 25p charge change Britain's throwaway coffee cup culture? - 5 January, 2018**

In the busy town centre of Guildford, England, on a weekday morning, a lot of people are carrying disposable coffee cups. Each minute in the UK, people throw away about 500 of these used coffee cups. Every year, consumers use and throw away 2.5 billion of them. Most of these are not recycled.

On the main street, coffee drinkers come and go – some look for recycling bins to put their used coffee cup in. Few of them realize that this will not reduce the mountain of waste created by Britain's £9 billion coffee-shop habit.

The UK has just three recycling factories that can separate the paper and plastic used to make the cups. At the moment, less than 1 in 400 cups – under 0.25% – are recycled. To deal with all the waste, some politicians want a 25p tax on takeaway coffees and teas – the money would pay for finding a way to make all cups recyclable. If this fails, they say disposable cups should be banned.

Businesswoman Caroline Gangadeen did not agree with the idea that consumers should pay a 25p charge on a cup because she believed that the eight cups a day she buys were all recyclable. When she heard that most cups are not recyclable, Gangadeen said: "I think people need to know this. I am still not happy to pay an extra 25p because we pay enough for a coffee in the first place. But it might make me remember to bring my own refillable cup more often."

How many used coffee cups are thrown away every minute in the UK?

How many are thrown away every year?

Are they recycled?

How much is the UK's coffee consumption worth?

How many recycling factories are there?

How many cups are recycled?

What do some politicians want to do?

Did the businesswoman agree with this idea?

How many cups of coffee does she drink every day?

Was she aware that these cups were not recycled?

Will she use a refillable cup in the future?