

PR 12692

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Charity collectors bag a hefty fine**

**A recycling company who distributed charity collection bags which were not quite what they seemed have ended up in Watford Magistrates Court.**

On 21 May, GT Recycling Initiatives Ltd was fined a total of £1,000 after pleading guilty to misleading consumers that their collection bags were authorised by a charity when they were not. Two charges were brought under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

The case was brought by Hertfordshire Trading Standards following charity collection bags being left on two occasions in Welwyn Garden City. The bags indicated that a charity would benefit from items collected. Whilst the charity had an agreement with GT Recycling, the agreement had ended. However, the bags with their name and logo were still distributed even following advice from Trading Standards.

In mitigation the company stated that the charity continued to receive financial donations from the use of their bags. They conceded that the bags should have been withdrawn and that their efforts to do this had not been good enough. The company had now taken advice and new systems had been put into practice to ensure distributors only had a weekly supply of bags and stock piling of bags could not occur.

Richard Thake, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, said: "The public have a right to know that items that they put into collection bags will benefit the charity named on the bag. If you have any concerns about this you should contact the charity and check that the collections are really being done on their behalf."

The company were also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £1,286.40. The collection bags seized by Trading Standards were ordered to be destroyed.

Ends

### **Notes for editors**

Hertfordshire Trading Standards complies with the Government's Customer Service Excellence Standard.

### **For further comment**

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