**New Waste Service Frequently Asked Questions**

**Why is Rochdale Council changing the bin collection service?**

The borough is currently one of the lower performing boroughs in Greater Manchester; recycling around 34.5%. The borough’s recycling rate is lower than the national average of 43.5% and below the 2020 European target of 50%.

* Like all councils, Rochdale Council is facing increasing financial pressure to reduce costs and needs to meet future recycling legislation and targets. The financial and environmental implications are far too high to continue as we are
* Rochdale Borough Council currently pays £306.62 a tonne for the general waste it collects from dark green bins. If the council does not increase recycling and reduce the amount of general waste, the total cost of waste disposal could increase by as much as £2 million by 2016/17
* To achieve an annual £1 million saving, we need to increase the recycling rate to 45% by March 2017
* Rochdale Borough is the last borough in Greater Manchester to roll out a borough wide collection of food waste. Introducing a separate food waste collection will help us achieve the 45% recycling target and associated cost savings

**What changes to the collection is Rochdale Council making?**

* Introduce weekly food and garden waste collections all year round
* Provide Households with a kitchen caddy and a small 23 litre brown street caddy. Households who already have a 240 litre brown bin will not receive the street caddy. Food and garden waste will be collected together from properties which already have a brown recycling bin
* Provide free compostable liners to help residents recycle more food waste
* Collect glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles and metal food & drinks cans, aerosol cans and aluminium foil (light green bins with blue lid) every 3 weeks
* Collect paper and card recycling bins (blue bin) every 3 weeks
* Collect general waste bins (dark green bin) every 3 weeks

**How much money will this change save the council?**

The change in service will provide Rochdale Borough Council with cost savings of up to £1 million a year which can help ease the saving requirements of other essential public services.

**How much is the new service change going to cost to implement?**

The new service will cost £690,000 to implement.

Of that £132,000 will be spent on re-routing of collection rounds, additional vehicle and staffing costs, £180,000 on publicity and education communications and £378,000 on food caddies, caddy liners and household distribution.

While the implementation costs appear to be substantial, the savings on payments for waste disposal from the increased recycling which we expect to achieve are estimated to be £1 million per annum, giving a pay-back period of just 8 months.

**Will the change in service result in job loses?**

There are no job cuts planned in relation to the changes proposed to this service

**Isn't three weeks between dark green bin collections just too long, how will we manage?**

Studies show that around 75% of your household collected waste can be recycled at the kerbside. If you make full use of all your recycling bins then you should have enough space in your dark green bin as this is only for waste that you cannot recycle.

* Although we will empty dark green bins less often (once every 3 weeks instead of 2) we empty food and garden waste more often. It's worth remembering that not so very many years ago you only had one bin for all your household waste. Now you have four bins and most households have a collection of two types of waste every week.
* Larger families with extra waste that can't be recycled, such as a lot of disposable nappies, have the opportunity to apply for an extra bin. This may involve a home visit and a waste audit with a recycling participation officer.

Research[[1]](#footnote-1) shows that approximately 32% of a household bin is food waste, so an average family who recycles as much as they can should have enough space in their general waste bin (dark green bin) for 3 weeks. All food waste can be recycled in the brown wheelie bin with your garden waste or the small brown street caddy. If you don’t already have a brown bin for your food and garden waste, we will provide you with a small 23 litre brown street caddy for your food waste free of charge.

We also provide a green bin with a blue lid so you can recycle glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles and metal food & drinks cans, aerosol cans and aluminium foil.

We also provide a blue bin for paper, newspapers, magazines, junk mail, cardboard packaging, phone books, cardboard and drinks cartons.

If you need more recycling bins, please get in touch. If you recycle but find that you still need more room to store all your waste, contact us on recycling@rochdale.gov.uk or call 0300 303 8884. We can offer advice on reducing your waste and we may be able to provide an additional dark green bin.

**Won’t having to wait 3 weeks to empty dark green bins increase the risk of fly-tipping?**

A similar collection service has been operating in the neighbouring borough of Bury since October 2014 and fly-tipping tonnages have actually decreased over this same period**.**

An average family who recycles as much as they can, should have enough space in their general waste bin (dark green bin) so fly-tipping should not be an issue. The council takes fly-tipping very seriously and will do everything in its power to prosecute offenders. Should you witness fly-tipping, please visit [www.rochdale.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/flytipping) to fill in a reporting form or contact the contact centre on 0300 303 8884.

**What about the people that don't bother recycling, what are you going to do about them?**

In the run up to the changes we will be encouraging anyone that doesn't currently recycle to make sure they get ready for the changes ahead and have the recycling bins they need.

Our Recycling Participation Officers will be visiting areas across the borough where we know some people struggle with recycling. The team will work with these communities to make sure they have the recycling bins they need and to help remove any barriers they have to recycling so that it can become a part of their daily life.

**Why can't we recycle items such as plastic yogurt pots, margarine containers and plastic food trays?**

Across Greater Manchester the only plastic items that can be recycled at the kerbside are plastic bottles. These go in your light green recycling bin.

Plastic bags, yogurt pots, plastic margarine containers and plastic food trays are all made of lower grade plastic. There is much less demand from recycling companies for lower grade plastic items and a more cost effective way of dealing with these items is to burn them to generate energy. For more information visit <http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/recover>

**What help is available for large families**

If you have extra waste you can’t recycle you may be apply for an extra general waste bin. Additional bins for general waste can only be provided for larger families with 6 or more members living permanently at an address. Evidence of family members will be required when ordering your bins. You will need to show that you recycle as much as possible and we may carry out a waste audit.

**Would it not be better to have a smaller dark green bin collected once every 2 weeks?**

* We decided against this option because it gives residents less bin space each week
* By keeping the full size bins and collecting these less often (once every 3 weeks instead of 2) we avoided additional spending of £1.62m to buy approximately 88,000 new smaller bins
* Swapping everyone's full size bin to a smaller one would also be a huge and difficult task

**Will you help us with recycling more?**

Yes. Before the changes take place, we will provide everyone with a detailed information pack to help with recycling all the right items in the right bin. We will also update this website.

We visit areas across the borough where we know residents are struggling to recycle. In these areas we talk to residents about recycling and help remove any barriers there may be to making recycling a part of daily life.

**If we're only having the dark green bin emptied once every three weeks, won't this cause a health hazard?**

Available evidence suggests that any potential health hazard to residents from less frequent bin collections (e.g. from odour and gas emissions, flies, maggots and vermin) is low and unlikely, even for those households with low rates of recycling (e.g. when people put food and/or garden waste in their dark green bin). Residents can help by:

* reducing, re-using and recycling as much waste as possible, including for example, using re-usable nappies or donating items to charity
* putting all used disposable nappies in a tied bag before placing them in the dark green bin
* putting any animal waste in a tied bag before placing it in the dark green bin
* not over-filling bins and keeping bin lids fully closed

**What will happen if the collection crew don't empty my bin on collection day?**

* All bins must be put out for emptying by 7am on collection day. If your bin was out at this time and we miss emptying it, report it to us from 5pm on your day of collection and by 1pm the next working day
* You can report a missed bin online
* After receiving a report of a valid missed bin our collection crew will return to empty it within three working days

**What happens if it's my fault my bin wasn't emptied?**

If your bin was missed because you failed to put it out by 7am, your bin was too heavy (e.g. you put rubble in your bin), your bin was too full and the lid was not fully closed, or your recycling bin contained the wrong items, you will need to

* Take out the contaminating items and take it to your recycling centre or put the items in the correct bin for collection on your next appropriate collection day
* Request a bulky waste collection from the council or commission an independent waste collection service to remove the items

You can save space in your dark green bin by flattening and squashing your waste and squeezing air out of plastic bags

* You can save space in your recycling bins by squashing plastic bottles, crushing cans and flattening cardboard.
* You can take extra waste to your recycling centre in Rochdale or Middleton or any centre across Greater Manchester. For details visit [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale)

**How will I manage if I am on holiday when my collection is due?**

Before going away, try to plan ahead:

* You can take extra waste to your recycling centre in Rochdale or Middleton or any centre across Greater Manchester. For details visit [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale)
* You could ask your neighbour to put your bin out for you and put it back again after emptying
* Don't forget if you are away on holiday then your bin is unlikely to be full

**What will happen if you have to delay or cancel my collection?**

* We only delay or cancel a collection as a last resort and this is very rare
* If we do have to delay a collection due to circumstances beyond our control (e.g. due to heavy snow) we will provide information on our website, on social media and via our Customer Contact Centre on 0300 303 8884
* If we know sufficiently far enough in advance that we must cancel or delay a collection we will deliver you a leaflet which will tell you what we plan to do and give you any instructions you should follow

**If you're only going to empty my dark green bin once every 3 weeks how will I manage over Christmas and New Year?**

* You can save space in your dark green bin by flattening and squashing your rubbish and squeezing air out of plastic bags
* You can cut back on the amount of waste you have to put in your dark green bin by choosing products with less packaging or that are packed in materials you can recycle.
* Remember that a lot of extra waste you generate over Christmas and New Year will be recyclable and you'll be able to put it in your blue, light green or brown recycling bins.
* We may need to change your collection day during this period but it will usually only change by a day or two, either before your scheduled collection date or after it. Residents will receive a leaflet before Christmas telling them of any change to collection days
* You can take extra waste to your recycling centre in Rochdale or Middleton or any centre across Greater Manchester. For details visit [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale). The centres are open every day except on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

**Can I buy a second bin?**

We do not sell additional bins. If you think you will need another dark green bin, please contact recycling@rochdale.gov.uk or call 0300 303 8884. There will be a charge for administration and delivery.

**I would like to order a new/additional bin**

Recycling bins - if you consistently exceed the capacity of your recycling bins please let us know and we can look to provide an extra bin free of charge.

Dark green bin - If you do recycle but find that you still need more room to store all your non-recyclable waste, please contact us and we can offer advice on reducing your waste and we may be able to provide an additional general waste bin. Please contact recycling@rochdale.gov.uk or call 0300 303 8884. Please note there is a charge for the administration and delivery of all additional refuse bins.

**If my bin is full, can I put out extra bin bags at the side of my general waste bin?**

No, we will not collect any bin bags left at the side of your general waste bin. Please use the recycling bins we have provided for recycling paper, cardboard, glass, cans, plastic bottles, aerosols and aluminium foil.

You should not put any recycling, food waste or garden waste in your general waste bin. Please make sure that the lid is shut when you put your bin out for collection.

Note: We will accept additional recycling materials outside your bin provided it is presented safely and securely (see waste collection policy).

**What are the options for residents with lots of disposable nappy waste?**

Residents could look at using Real Nappies - these are washable cotton nappies that can be reused. Details of suppliers can be found at [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/nappies](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/nappies). Alternatively you may be able to apply for an additional general waste bin. You will need to show that you recycle as much as possible and the council may carry out a waste audit.

**Can I put food waste in my garden waste bin?**

Yes, you can put all types of food waste in your garden waste bin. You must either buy liners that are designed to compost with the food waste, or use newspaper or put food waste in loose. Your garden and food waste is currently collected fortnightly. Under the new proposals, they would be collected weekly.

**Why should I recycle my food waste?**

At least 32% of household waste collected across the borough is unused or leftover food. Due to the rising cost of waste disposal, it is 5 times more expensive to collect and dispose of food waste in your refuse bin than it is to recycle your food waste in your brown wheeled bin.

**Which types of food waste can I recycle in my brown bin?**

Fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, dairy products, egg shells, carcasses and bones, plate scrapings, rice, pasta, bread, pastries, tea bags and coffee grounds. All cooked and uncooked food can be recycled.

You can also recycle your pet food in your brown bin.

**Can I leave extra garden waste in bags alongside my brown bin?**

We are not able to collect any garden waste left at the side of your bin. You can either compost it, take it to one of the household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) to recycle it for free or keep the extra garden waste until your next collection.

HWRCs can be found at Chichester Street in Rochdale and at Springvale in Middleton. Please visit [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/rochdale) for details.

**Can I use plastic bags to line my caddy?**

No, you must either use the compostable liners we supply as these are designed to compost with the food waste, or use newspaper or put food waste in loose. Plastic or biodegradable bags do not compost and may cause the lorry load of food waste collected to be sent to landfill.

**Do I have to use the compostable liners or can I put food waste straight into the brown bin?**

You can put food waste straight into your brown bin. The liners are an option to help you to keep your caddy clean and to assist the process of transferring food waste to your brown bin. The liners help keep your brown bin clean and help minimise smells.

We have provided a kitchen caddy to make it easier for you to collect all your food waste in your kitchen without having to go outside to your brown wheelie bin every time you need to put your food waste in it.

**Where can I get compostable liners?**

We will provide you with compostable liners.

Remember: We cannot accept any type of plastic bags, not even degradable or biodegradable ones, as they do not compost. These bags are generally oil based products with special additives to break them down into smaller pieces of plastic which contaminate the compost.

**Will collections of food and garden waste be postponed during the winter months?**

No - collections will continue weekly throughout the year.

**I am bothered about smells from my caddy. What can I do?**

By keeping the caddy lid securely closed smells will not escape. Changing your compostable liner regularly will also help. The average household will use around 3 liners per week.

**I haven't got space for the caddy in my kitchen. What can I do?**

Try putting it in a cupboard or just outside the backdoor. You may even use your own receptacle to collect food waste, like a bowl or bespoke bin that are available at many leading high street retailers.

**I already home compost most of my food waste. Do I have to use the brown bin/street caddy?**

Please continue to compost at home as this the best environmental option for disposing of certain food wastes.

For foods you can’t home compost such as meat, eggs, fish, dairy products or cooked food can be put in your brown bin/street caddy.

**My brown bin states ‘No food waste’ on the lid**

Please ignore this. The lid information about food waste applies to the old garden waste only collection system.

**What happens to the food and garden waste after it is collected?**

It is taken to the new In-vessel Composting (IVC) facility at Chichester Street, Rochdale where it is composted. In-vessel is an enclosed, intensive method of composting with accurate temperature control and monitoring to ensure that the material is fully sanitised before it is matured and screened for use as soil conditioner in agriculture. For further information please visit [www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/compost](http://www.recycleforgreatermanchester.com/compost)

1. *Resource Futures Final Report to Defra: WR1002 Detailed compositional assessment for municipal residual waste and recycling streams in England* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)