



## Stirling Council

### Updated Waste Transformation FAQ

27-07-2020

On Tuesday June 30, Stirling Council [approved changes](#) to its waste collection services.

Stirling Council has created the following Q&A to answer the most common questions raised in recent weeks following this decision.

Further community engagement and direct communication will be made with residents in the coming months before the introduction of these changes, which do not start until 2021.

You can read the full report discussed at Council as a [downloadable PDF](#).

#### What changes are being made to bin collections?

- Roll out of new standard 'comb lift' bins to replace existing 'diamond lift' bins from **Autumn 2020 to July 2021**
- Stopping the current free garden waste collection, and the introduction of an opt-in fortnightly garden waste collection permit (£35 per-year, per bin) **from April 2021**
- A new 4-weekly collection frequency for the grey bin (non-recyclable waste), instead of the current fortnightly service. This will be phased in **after July 2021**.
- A new 4-weekly collection frequency for the blue bin (plastics, cans and cartons), instead of the current fortnightly service. This will be phased in **after July 2021**.
- The ending of glass box collections when the Scottish Government's [National Deposit Return Scheme](#) **starts in July 2022**. Glass collections will continue until the new scheme fully kicks in. After this, glass waste not covered by the scheme can be put in your blue bin.

Please note that green bin (paper and cardboard) collections will stay the same and will be collected every four weeks and there will be no change to the frequency of brown bin collections (fortnightly).

#### Why are you making these changes?

There are two key reasons why the Council has made these necessary changes:

- Reduce waste to landfill and increase recycling rates to meet national targets.
- Reduce the costs of providing our household waste service.

The ongoing Climate Emergency remains at the top of the Council's agenda – we are committed to protecting and improving the environment on which we all depend.

Stirling residents currently only recycle 54% of household waste and more than half of the contents of average general waste bins collected (nationally) should have been placed in other bins for recycling.

This needs to improve to meet the national target of 70% by 2025. The changes we are making will help us reduce the volume and types of waste we send to landfill and increase the amount we recycle.

The changes will provide total savings of £1.126million:

- Moving to a 4 weekly collection frequency for blue and grey bins will save £357,000
- Removing the separate glass collection service in 2022 will save £217,000
- Introducing a Garden Waste charge at £35 per bin could raise £552,000 in income, based on a 45% uptake rate

### **Why are these changes necessary to bin collections to improve recycling?**

The Stirling household recycling rate has stayed at 54% in recent years, despite national surveys showing a large amount of recycling still being sent to landfill. The new service changes will encourage residents to maximise recycling for the benefit of our local and national environment.

Waste analysis undertaken nationally found almost 60% of the general (non-recyclable) waste bin could typically have been recycled within existing household recycling services. This means more than half of the contents of the average general household waste bin should have been placed in other bins for recycling.

Other Councils which have extended general waste frequencies have seen drops in general waste, reducing overall tonnage of valuable resources lost to landfill.

Landfill waste has been collected fortnightly for nearly 20 years by Stirling Council. In that time recycling capacity has increased significantly, with the previous household collection service and blue and green 240l bins introduced in 2016.

Less waste than ever now requires to be put into landfill so it is not operationally, financially or environmentally sustainable for grey bin collections to continue fortnightly.

### **Why are you introducing a charge for garden waste?**

The garden waste charge of £35 will commence from April 2021. The charge is **optional** and works out at £1.40 per collection.

Collecting garden waste is not a statutory service and a number of other Councils have introduced a Garden Waste Permit system in recent years, including Angus, Highland, Perth and Kinross and Clackmannanshire.

More than 80% of the contents of the average brown bin is garden waste, underlining the need for residents to increase their food waste recycling. There are considerable costs for uplifting and treating this material. The Garden Waste Permit will help us deliver critical services to the public at a time when the Council is facing significant financial pressures. We understand some households may find it challenging to pay for this and we are developing a concessionary scheme for those who need it.

**Do I need to buy a Garden Waste Permit if I'm only recycling food in my brown bin?**

No, food waste recycling will remain free of charge.

**How many brown bins will a Garden Waste Permit cover?**

A Garden Waste Permit of £35 covers one brown bin per annum. Residents may have the opportunity to purchase another brown bin and we will provide more details on this in due course.

**Why not just raise Council Tax instead of introducing a Garden Waste Permit?**

Not all Stirling households have a garden and use the garden waste recycling service. It will be voluntary for households to opt into the Garden Waste Permit if they want/need to participate in garden waste recycling.

**What will the money raised from Garden Waste Permits go towards?**

The funds raised from those choosing to opt into the garden waste recycling service will go towards running the Waste Service in future years.

**What if I don't want to buy a Garden Waste Permit, what are my options?**

Residents with access to transport will be able to bring their garden waste free of charge to any of the Council's [three Household Recycling Centres](#). Households can also participate in home composting. Detailed guidance on how to successfully compost at home is available on the [Council's website](#).

**Why are you changing glass box collections in 2022?**

From 1 July, 2022, the [Scottish Government's Deposit Return Scheme](#) (DRS) will come into force. This programme will place a deposit levy on drinks containers, including all drinks sold in plastic, metal and glass. Residents will reclaim these deposits when returning the containers to any place of purchase.

Following the start of the DRS in 2022, it is expected that eventually more than 90% of all glass bottles will be returned to shops to reclaim deposits. This diversion of glass bottles into the DRS will make a separate glass collection unsustainable at that time. After the scheme fully kicks in we will collect any glass packaging waste in the blue bin that is not covered by the glass deposit scheme.

**What consultation was carried out on these changes?**

In recent years, several consultation exercises on the current waste service provision have taken place

as part of annual budget engagement. Residents were also invited to answer a survey on proposed changes to waste collections in the Festive Waste Collection calendars mailed to every household in December 2019.

Formal and informal feedback from residents tells us

- You are frustrated by bins being swallowed into the back of vehicles
- Delays in bin replacement
- Collections not consistently taking place on scheduled dates.
- Only 64.3% of Stirling residents are satisfied with local refuse collections compared to 76.3% in Scotland.

Community engagement and communications directly with residents will be undertaken and delivered prior to, during and following the changes to bin collections.

### **Why am I still paying the same Council Tax but my bins are being picked up less frequently?**

Council Tax raised contributes directly to the delivery of local public services provided by each Council and is spent in the district in which it is raised. It is not a service charge specifically related to any type or frequency of collection.

All statutory household waste and recycling, including food waste, will still be collected from every resident in Stirling free of charge under this new model.

### **Will I be getting a bigger bin or a second bin?**

The size of your grey, blue, green and brown bin will remain the same. Most households have a standard 240 Litre bin for each.

We will give special consideration to large families and households with exceptional circumstances. The approved new collection service will bring Stirling closer in line with the total capacity provided for waste and recycling by neighbouring Council areas.

### **If my bin sits for longer, I'm worried about vermin and smell**

Changes to the household collection service will encourage greater recycling and reduce avoidable biodegradable waste being presented in grey bins.

Most importantly, there will be no change to the frequency of food waste collections, which will remain on a fortnightly collection within the brown bin. All households should have or can obtain from the Council a kitchen caddy to recycle food waste for transferring to a brown bin.

A hygiene collection service will also be implemented to provide additional capacity for customers who have large families and or additional hygiene/medical products (e.g. nappies) for disposal.

**I'm concerned fly-tipping will increase because of the new service?**

On average we receive 800 reports of fly-tipping per year. Given the public can take waste to our tips for free, there is no legitimate reason or excuse for an increase in this unacceptable, criminal behaviour.

[If a person is caught fly-tipping](#), they will be fined £200 up to £40,000 and could face up to 6 months in prison. The Council will continue enforcement activities for incidences of identified fly-tipping across the area.

**What if my grey or blue bins get full?**

We would encourage residents firstly to recycle as much as possible by using all recycling bins provided. If you have additional non-recyclable waste, this can be taken to one of our [Household Waste and Recycling Centres](#).

**What happens if my bin is missed, will I have to wait longer?**

All bins must be presented at the kerbside by 7am on your scheduled collection day.

Where your bin has been presented on time, but has been missed in error, please report this [via our missed bin form](#) on the Council's website and we will return for it soon as possible.

**What about flatted properties without food waste recycling bins?**

Waste Service officers will be reviewing bin allocations for flatted properties as part of the planned services changes. Residents will be written to nearer the time to explain how the service will work for where you live.

**What if I can't move my bin because it's heavier?**

An assisted pull out service is currently available to residents in need of this service. Residents who are disabled, elderly or infirm, can request the service by contacting the Council's Contact Centre on 01786 404040.

**What happens next?**

Residents will have an opportunity to raise any further issues and household specific queries as we carry out significant engagement and communications about the rollout of these measures. This is a crucial part of the process and will ensure we deliver an efficient, sustainable waste collection service that meets the needs of everyone in the Council area.

**Remember the key facts**

Stirling Council collects waste from around 44,000 households.

Only grey and blue bins are changing in their collection frequency. The collection frequency of brown and green bins will stay the same. Glass box collections will remain in place on a four-weekly collection cycle until June 2022, when the [Deposit Return Scheme](#) starts.

An optional £35 per annum per brown bin charge will be introduced from April 2021 for garden waste recycling. Food waste will continue to be collected in the brown bins free of charge.

Waste analysis undertaken nationally shows that around 60% of general waste could typically have been recycled within existing household recycling services. Households in Stirling also currently only recycle 54% of household materials. We must all do more to reach the target of 70% nationally to be met by 2025.

Household Waste and Recycling Centres will continue to operate as normal. Stirling residents will be able to bring garden waste to Recycling Centres free of charge

Only 64.3% of Stirling residents are satisfied with local refuse collections compared to 76.3% in Scotland as a whole.

A hygiene collection service will also be implemented to provide additional capacity for customers who have large families and/or additional hygiene/medical products (e.g. nappies) for disposal.

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