

Better Recycling

Frequently Asked Questions

As @ 13 November 2025

Question	Theme	Answer	Links
What are the changes that are happening?	General	<p>As part of the Government's Simper Recycling strategy, all councils are being asked to make changes to improve recycling rates and encourage a more consistent national approach to recycling across England and Wales.</p> <p>To support this, we will be introducing a new weekly food waste collection. You will be provided with a 5L caddy for gathering food waste in the kitchen, and a 23L container to be put outside for collection.</p> <p>In addition, you will get a 240L recycling bin for paper and cardboard. You will also be able to start recycling glass and tetrapak cartons in your existing blue recycling bin when the new services start.</p> <p>To accommodate the additional recycling bin, the general waste and recycling bins will move to three-weekly collections.</p>	
Why are these changes happening?	General	<p>The Government is requiring local councils to implement its Simpler Recycling strategy, which aims to enhance recycling rates and encourage a more consistent national approach to recycling across England and Wales. The government has set a target to reach 60% of waste being recycled by 2030.</p> <p>The new weekly food waste service, and the ability to recycle cartons and glass in the existing blue recycling bin, will ensure all households will be able to recycle more of their household waste.</p> <p>The new 240L recycling bin to separate paper and cardboard from other recyclables helps ensure better quality material for recycling, reduces contamination and makes the overall recycling process more efficient.</p> <p>The changes will help the environment by increasing Suffolk's recycling rate, reducing the amount of waste that goes into our rubbish bins and decreasing the carbon emissions impacts of the Suffolk waste and recycling collection service. This is all vital in our efforts to combat the climate</p>	

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		<p>emergency and create a circular economy - an objective to keep materials and resources in use for as long as possible through repeated cycles of recycling and reuse, rather than being thrown away.</p>	
<p>What are the new bins I will be receiving?</p>	<p>General</p>	<p>Each household will receive an extra 240L bin for paper and cardboard. This will be a grey base with a bright green lid.</p> <p>In addition, every household will receive containers for a weekly collection of food waste. You will get a 5L caddy, intended to sit on your worktop in the kitchen, and a larger 23L container for you to empty the 5L caddy into for collection. The 23L container is designed to be stored outdoors and has a secure lid to prevent spillage or pests.</p> <p>You will also initially receive a pack of biodegradable liners for the kitchen caddy to get you started. Once this pack is finished, you will be responsible for buying the caddy liners. These are widely available in most supermarkets.</p>	
<p>Better Recycling is dumb/a waste of money</p>	<p>General</p>	<p>The government is requiring local councils to implement its Simpler Recycling strategy, which aims to enhance recycling rates and encourage a more consistent national approach to recycling across England and Wales. The government has set a target to reach 60% of waste being recycled by 2030.</p> <p>Recycling helps the environment by reducing carbon emissions, and it also reduces the need for new products to be made from raw materials. This is all vital in our efforts to combat the climate emergency and ensures resources can be repeatedly recycled and reused.</p> <p>The government is providing additional funding to Councils to help fund new services. The grants have provided sufficient funds for the setting up costs, including the procurement and distribution of new bins, the purchase of new food waste collection vehicles, as well as logistical and communication costs.</p> <p>In addition, the Government is making the producers of packaging financially responsible for the materials they place on shop shelves. This means that in future, producers must help fund the recycling collection services provided by your Council, rather than this being a cost to the taxpayer.</p>	
<p>Why should I spend time recycling?</p>	<p>General</p>	<p>Recycling helps the environment by reducing carbon emissions, and it also reduces the need for new products to be made from raw materials. This is all vital in our efforts to combat the climate emergency and ensures resources can be repeatedly recycled and reused.</p>	

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		<p>It's important to put the right items into your recycling bin. Currently, about 20% of the items we collect in Suffolk are rejected due to the wrong items being placed in the recycling bins.</p> <p>Why is this a problem?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality is key - Companies that use your recyclables to make new products will not accept spoiled items. 2. It's wasteful - Putting the wrong items into your recycling bin also means that good items will become 'spoiled' and won't get recycled. 3. It's expensive - Cleaning up spoiled items costs Suffolk's taxpayers. 4. It could be dangerous - Spoiled items are unpleasant and dangerous for staff at the Materials Recycling Facility to remove. This often has to be done by hand. 	
When will I receive the new bins?	Bin Delivery	The new bins will be delivered between February and May of next year. You will receive all three bins: the 240L bin for fibres, the 23L bin and 5L caddy for food waste, and a roll of caddy liners on the same day. You will be notified in advance by letter, so you are aware of deliveries and can bring the new bins in after delivery.	
What do I do with my new bins before collection begins?	Bin Delivery	You will receive your new bins between February and May 2026, but collection will not begin until June 2026. In the meantime, you will need to store the bins on your property and off the street until the new services start. We will provide you with a calendar, so you know exactly when to start using them.	
When will the new collection schedule / new bins begin?	Collection	The new waste services will begin in June 2026. Exact dates for your first collection will be in the calendar that will be provided to you.	
How will I know which bin to put out when?	Collection	All residents will receive letters detailing their collection schedule and a calendar for the year ahead. Residents will also be able to look up their collection dates on our website, using the Bin Collection Dates Finder, and the new recycling bins will feature a QR code that you can also use to look up information.	View your bin collection dates - My East Suffolk
Will my collection day change?	Collection	<p>Yes, for most residents, collection days will change. This is because we are moving to a three-weekly collection schedule for general waste and recycling, as well as adjusting routes to make collections more efficient. Food waste will also be collected weekly on the same day as general waste & recycling. Garden waste collection will continue to be fortnightly; the collection day may change to align with the general and recycling collection days.</p> <p>You will be provided with a calendar detailing your collection schedule. You will also be able to look up collection dates on our website, using the Bin Collection Dates Finder, and the new recycling bins will feature a QR code that you can also use to look up information.</p>	View your bin collection dates - My East Suffolk

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<p>What is the new collection pattern?</p>	<p>Collection</p>	<p>We are moving from a fortnightly collection to a three-weekly rotation for your main bins. This means one week you will have general waste collected, one week will have the paper and cardboard recycling bin collected and one week you will have the containers (plastic/metal/glass/cartons) recycling bin collected.</p> <p>The food waste will be collected on a weekly basis on the same day as your general waste/recycling.</p> <p>The garden bin will remain fortnightly, but the day may change to align with the day that your other bins are collected.</p>	
<p>What bins will I have and what can I put in each bin?</p>	<p>Collection</p>	<p>The calendar that you will receive will have information on what can be recycled in each bin. This will be issued to you before the service begins.</p> <p>240L blue bin - Containers Recycling Plastics (bottles, pots, tubs, trays, cleaning bottles and sprays, bathroom bottles), metals (cans, tins, aluminium foil, trays, empty aerosols), cartons, glass, plastic films. Material should be clean, dry and loose (not in bags); labels do not need to be removed.</p> <p>240L grey base with bright green lid - Fibres recycling Paper, cardboard, magazines. Staples and small amounts of tape do not need to be removed.</p> <p>240L black bin - general waste Any non-recyclable materials, including nappies, plastics/metals/fibres less than 5cm, pill packaging, and pet food packets.</p> <p>240L brown/dark green (Optional) - garden waste Leaves, grass, straw, flowers, plants, plant pruning, weeding and clippings.</p> <p>Grey 23L - Food waste Fruit and vegetable scraps, leftovers, meat, carbohydrates (bread/pasta/rice), meat, eggshells, dairy products.</p> <p>Grey 5L - Food waste For use in the kitchen, not for street collection.</p> <p>Other Recyclables that cannot be put in recycling bins but can be recycled elsewhere:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Electronic Waste - place on top of wheely bins. There is limited space in the cage on the rubbish truck. If it is not collected, try again the following collection. • Large Electricals and furniture - take to a recycling centre or use bulky collection • Textiles - bring banks • Batteries - supermarket recycling collection points 	<p>What can I put in my recycling bin? - Suffolk Recycling</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large hard plastics - take to a recycling centre • Kitchen pots and pans - take to a recycling centre 	
What will happen to the garden waste service?	Collections	The garden waste service will continue to be a fortnightly collection for those residents who subscribe to the service. The collection day may change to align with the new collection schedule.	
Can I get more caddy liners?	Collections	You will initially receive one pack of caddy liners for the 5L caddy bins. Once this packet is finished, you are responsible for the continued purchase of these. The liners need to be biodegradable and are widely available in most supermarkets.	
What if I don't want the extra bin and food caddy?	Participation	From 2026, it is the law that councils provide all of their residents with the means to separate their recycling and to offer a weekly food waste service collection. To meet these obligations, East Suffolk Council, like all other councils across England, will be giving all households the means to split their recycling and separately dispose of their food waste.	
What if I don't use the extra recycling bin?	Participation	If you continue to put all of your recycling into only one bin, that bin will be classified as contaminated and will not be collected. For your recycling to be subsequently collected, you will need to separate your recycling into the correct bins for collection.	
What if I don't separate my food waste?	Participation	<p>Food waste disposed of in a general, black bin will be sent to the Energy-from-Waste facility in Great Blakenham to be burnt and converted into energy. Whilst Energy-from-Waste is more environmentally friendly than traditional landfill, it does involve the emission of greenhouse gases. Food waste disposed of via the new food waste collections will be processed at an anaerobic digester, where it will be converted into agricultural fertiliser. Anaerobic digestion has a lower environmental impact than Energy-from-Waste.</p> <p>In planning the revised collections of bins across East Suffolk, we have assumed a significant proportion of food waste will be diverted into food waste caddies and collected separately. This change helps to support the move to a 3-weekly collection cycle for general waste.</p>	
The three weekly general waste collections will not be enough	Service Adaptation	The changes to the waste collection will mean the volume of waste being collected will increase. With the new weekly food waste collection, most households will notice a significant reduction in the amount of general waste they produce. From June 2026, you will also be able to recycle glass and cartons in your existing blue bin, and paper and cardboard will go into the separate new recycling bin, all of which helps free up space in your general waste bin. Other councils that have already launched food collection have found that general waste has decreased significantly. We recommend that you give the new system a try first. Many households find that with the additional recycling options, they will need less general waste capacity than expected.	

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		<p>If you live in a household with 6 or more people, or have a medical condition that generates a lot of extra waste, you are able to request an additional general waste bin.</p> <p>To apply for an extra bin, go to: Ordering and replacement of wheeled bins » East Suffolk Council</p> <p>You are also able to take any extra waste to one of Suffolk's 11 Recycling Centres.</p>	
<p>I don't have space for another bin</p>	<p>Service Adaptation</p>	<p>The council believes most households have the ability to store and put out the additional bins safely and use the new services fully. This is based on research, detailed knowledge of our local areas and the experience of operating collection services for many years.</p> <p>The amount of space required to accommodate all bins, including the existing and new bins, is 1.32 m² (and a further 0.4 m² for garden waste). This may be in your front or back garden.</p> <p>However, we recognise that there will be some homes, such as terraced properties and flats, that will require a slightly different approach. The council is currently in the process of identifying and evaluating properties that are likely to have issues around space or access and may require smaller bins or other receptacles. Residents will also be able to request an assessment of their property for appropriate accommodations closer to the launch of the new waste and recycling collection service in 2026.</p>	
<p>How much space will I need for the extra bins</p>	<p>Service Adaption</p>	<p>To accommodate all East Suffolk Council provided bins and containers, a household requires approximately 1.32 m² (14.2 ft²) (and a further 0.4 m² (4.3 ft²) for garden waste) of space on their property.</p> <p>The dimensions of the bins are: Standard Bins 240L: 74cm depth x 58cm width x 107cm high 23L food bin: 34cm depth x 29cm width x 39cm height 5L kitchen caddy: 19cm depth x 25cm width x 21.2cm height</p> <p>Other bins 1100L communal bin: 100cm depth x 127cm wide x 147cm high 140L: 57cm depth x 48cm width x 105cm height</p>	
<p>What are the reasons that you</p>	<p>Service Adaptation</p>	<p>The criteria for whether a service adaptation will be considered are:</p>	

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may get a service adaptation?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a property does not have sufficient space to accommodate the standard set of bins safely or hygienically (exclusive of a garden waste bin), as benchmarked against the anticipated requirement of 1.32 m² (14.2 ft²). • Should access to and from a property be restricted, including the presence of steps, for the presentation and/or collection of bins? • Should the safety, security and/or integrity of a property be negatively impacted? • Should a household be required to wheel a bin through the interior of their property to safely store and present a bin on the kerbside, back alley or driveway? • If the storing of bins results in a property's required car parking space being compromised and not able to accommodate the officially stipulated number of vehicles. • Should a property's terrain be completely unsuitable for the regular storage and movement of bins, such as on a steep gradient or suffering from persistent waterlogging? • Where a property is not able to safely present bins on an adjacent or nearby kerbside, back alley or accessible driveway. • Where the presence and location of bins will materially impact on East Suffolk Council's duties to protect and manage designated Conservation Areas. <p>The council is currently in the process of identifying and evaluating properties that are likely to have issues around space or access. Once this is complete, if you believe your property meets the criteria, you will be able to apply online for a further assessment of your property. Further details on how to apply will be shared as soon as possible.</p>	
I have communal bins. Will I still be able to use the food waste service?	Service Adaptations	Yes, households with communal bins will be included in the food waste service. Each household will receive a 5L caddy for collecting food waste in the kitchen. There will then be a 140L communal food bin for you to use. Please bag food waste in a biodegradable caddy liner before placing it in the communal bin.	
Will communal bins move from a fortnightly to a three-weekly collection?	Service Adaptations	Some communal bins will move to a three-weekly collection, while some may have a more frequent collection. This will depend on factors such as the current collection schedule, bin capacity, and number of residents. East Suffolk officers are currently reviewing communal properties to ensure that changes are implemented efficiently and appropriately.	
My communal bin store won't fit any more bins	Service Adaptations	East Suffolk officers are currently reviewing communal properties to ensure that changes are implemented efficiently and appropriately. Some bins will be repurposed or changed where space is limited.	

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Can I exchange my 140L Bin for a larger 240L Bin?	Service Adaptation	If you currently have a 140L bin, you can request to exchange it for a 240L bin free of charge. To exchange your bins, contact our Customer Services team.	Ordering and replacement of wheeled bins » East Suffolk Council
I currently have 140L bins. Will my new bins also be 140L?	Service Adaptations	<p>Our officers are reviewing all properties in East Suffolk to determine if they can accommodate additional bins. In some cases, residents with limited space will continue to receive 140L bins, while others will receive the standard 240L bin. If you have concerns, you will be able to request an assessment closer to the start date to make sure the solution works for your property.</p> <p>The 140L bins will need to have sufficient capacity to store 3 weeks' worth of waste and recycling. If you feel that your current 140L bins will be insufficient with a three-weekly collection, you can request to exchange your 140L bin for a 240L bin. To exchange your existing 140L bins for 240L bins, contact our customer services team.</p>	Ordering and replacement of wheeled bins » East Suffolk Council
I have sacks what will these changes look like for me? Will I be able to use the food service?	Service Adaptations	An assessment of properties that currently receive sack collections will be made to see how we might offer the best service. There may be instances where we cannot offer a food waste collection service to some properties. You will receive detailed information closer to the start date of the new service, including any adaptations specific to your property.	
What if I need to dispose of a high volume of nappies or incontinence pads?	Hygiene	Residents are advised to use their existing general, black bins for such waste. If your bin is not able to adequately store all of your general waste over a 3-week period as a result of nappies, incontinence pads or other similar hygiene products, please contact us so we can provide you with further support.	
How hygienic will the food waste service be?	Hygiene	<p>Caddies will be provided for residents to collect food waste in their properties. 5 litre compostable caddy liners are recommended to be used in the caddies, and easily available to purchase. An introductory pack of liners will be provided free-of-charge at the launch of the new service.</p> <p>Filled liners can then be transferred into the food waste containers, which can be stored outside. The containers are specifically designed and tested to securely and hygienically store food waste. They feature a strong lid that has a locking mechanism, which prevents the containers from being accessible to animals and prevents waste spilling onto the wall should the container be knocked over.</p> <p>The caddies and containers can be easily cleaned in a sink or using a garden hose, for example. The caddy is dishwasher safe.</p>	

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Will the three weekly general waste collection cause odours and pest issues?	Hygiene	<p>We currently collect food waste fortnightly in your general waste bin. The new service will provide a separate weekly food waste collection, which will mean food is sitting in your bin half the time that it currently does.</p> <p>Several councils across England, Wales and Scotland have already implemented three weekly collections. They have not had significant issues with odours or pests. Waste placed into the general bin should be bagged to reduce odours, and the bins are also designed to be resistant to pests.</p>	
What if I forgot to put my bin out or put out the wrong bin?	Collections	You will need to wait until the next scheduled collection day. You are also able to take waste to one of Suffolk's 11 Recycling Centres.	
What if my bin is missed?	Collections	If your bin has been missed, except in instances where the correct bin wasn't presented on time, please report it via our website. Please wait until after 3:30 pm on the collection day to report your missed bin, as often our crews will try to rectify the problem at the end of the day.	Missed bin collections » East Suffolk Council
Where does my waste go?	Disposal	<p>Suffolk County Council is responsible for the disposal of waste and recycling.</p> <p>Suffolk's general waste is processed by the Energy-from-Waste facility in Great Blakenham, which is operated by SUEZ, where it is incinerated and converted into energy.</p> <p>Suffolk's recycling is processed by the Materials Recycling Facility also at Great Blakenham, which is operated by Biffa. The Facility using the latest technology and highly-trained staff to separate and sort the materials into bales, which are subsequently sold for repurposing.</p> <p>Suffolk garden waste is composted using windrow composting at a site in Suffolk near Bury St Edmunds.</p> <p>Suffolk's food waste will eventually be processed by a new anaerobic digester located just outside of Southwold, where the waste will be processed into agricultural fertiliser. Whilst this site is being developed, food waste will be transported to other nearby anaerobic processing plants.</p>	Waste site visits - Suffolk Recycling
Will any of my waste go overseas?	Disposal	<p>Food waste will be processed into fertiliser using an anaerobic digester located just outside of Southwold or other local sites.</p> <p>Garden waste is processed into soil improver at a facility located in Suffolk, near Bury St Edmunds.</p> <p>General waste is incinerated and converted into energy in a facility in Suffolk, near Great Blakenham.</p>	

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		<p>Recycling is sorted and baled by Biffa, and then is sold to reprocessors for recycling into new products. Biffa prioritises the sale of materials to reprocessors based in the UK first; if there are no buyers, they will attempt to sell to the EU before selling to the rest of the world. Currently, no plastic or metal is being sold overseas, but some paper, cardboard and electronic waste is. This can change depending on market demand.</p> <p>No waste or recycling is directly exported overseas.</p>	
How will assisted collections be affected?	Collections	The assisted collections service will continue as usual. If you are unable to physically put your bins out and need an assisted collection, please get in contact with us.	Assisted refuse collections, East Suffolk Council
What will happen if I leave my bins out on the street?	Street Scene	<p>Residents should store their bins on their property between collections. Bins should be put out by 6 am on the day of collection, and returned to the property that day following collection.</p> <p>Leaving bins out on the pavement can block access and look unsightly. Leaving bins out is also a civil offence, and East Suffolk Council has the ability to take enforcement action against residents who do not correctly store their bins.</p>	
How will this be paid for?	Financing	<p>The Government is providing additional funding to Councils to help fund new services. The grants have provided sufficient funds for the setting up costs, including the procurement and distribution of new bins, the purchase of new food waste collection vehicles, as well as logistical and communication costs.</p> <p>In addition, the Government is making the producers of packaging financially responsible for the materials they place on shop shelves. This means that in the future producers must help fund the collection services provided by your Council, rather than this being a cost to the taxpayer.</p> <p>The move to three-weekly collections will also help offset the ongoing collections costs of the new services.</p>	