

Wokingham Borough Council

New food waste collection service from April 2019

Frequently asked questions

Q: Why is the Council collecting food waste?

A: Your separate food waste collection service is being introduced to help increase recycling, reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill and help the environment as a result.

30% of residual blue bag waste produced by residents is biodegradable food waste – that's about 10,000 tonnes annually. Recycling food waste instead sending to landfill it will cost Wokingham Borough Council about £100 less per tonne.

When this material is sent to landfill it decomposes and produces methane which is a potent greenhouse gas that contributes towards climate change. This is something the Council wants to avoid and so we want to be recycling at least 50% of residents' rubbish by the end of 2020.

Q: What will happen to the food waste?

Instead of going to landfill, the food waste Wokingham Borough recycles through its new service will be sent to an anaerobic digestion (AD) plant, where the methane it gives off will be captured and burnt to produce electricity. The left over material can then be used as a fertiliser. So, the new service will turn food waste from a problem into a resource.

Q: What are the benefits of recycling food waste?

A: There are many benefits to recycling your food waste:

- It saves the Council money by diverting material from landfill
- It reduces the amount of methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) released by landfill sites into the atmosphere
- It reduces problems with pests raiding blue rubbish bags and causing litter as the food waste is contained in sealed, lockable containers
- It can be used to generate electricity and as a fertiliser

Q: What is changing?

A: The new service will be very easy to use. New vehicles with three separate compartments – one for blue bags waste, second for black box recycling and third for food waste - means your food waste will be collected every week at the same time as we collect your rubbish and recycling. Nothing else about your service will change including collection days – they will stay the same.

Q: How will the service work?

A: The new service will be very easy to use. Residents will receive two food waste containers, a small indoor kitchen caddy (5 litre) to collect food in the kitchen and a larger outdoor caddy (23 litre) to present the food waste at the kerbside on the day of collection. These will be delivered to everyone's home from mid-March, 2019.

Liners for the small indoor kitchen caddy will also be delivered with your containers, after which they will be available from Council Offices and libraries.

If you're unsure about how to use your food waste caddies, find out more by visiting Wokingham Borough Council website www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search for "food waste collections" or by calling Wokingham Borough Customer Delivery team on (0118) 974 6000.

Q: How big are the food waste caddies?

The small indoor kitchen caddy is 5 litres and measures [250mm (w) x 205mm (d) x 205mm (h)]

The larger outdoor caddy is 23 litres, has a lockable lid and measures [320mm (w) x 400mm (d) x 405mm (h)]

If you would like to see the caddies and learn more about the new service we will be holding a series of Roadshows across the borough:

- Morrisons, Woosehill – 5 February, 2019 10am – 2pm
- Asda Shopping Mall, Lower Earley – 12 February, 2019, 10am – 2pm
- Waitrose, Twyford – 19 February, 2019, 10am – 2pm

We will also have static displays of the caddies at the following locations between November, 2018 –and April, 2019

- Council Offices, Shute End (November, 2018 – December, 2018)
- Wokingham Library (January, 2019)
- Earley Library (February, 2019)
- Woodley Library (March, 2019)
- Finchampstead Library (April, 2019)

Q: How can I get more liners?

A: Once you have used up your initial supply of liners, which will be delivered with your caddies, you will be able to get more from Council Offices and public libraries free of charge. They may also be available from other locations and these will be announced in due course.

Q: What can go in my food waste caddies?

A: All types of food waste can go in the caddies. This includes:

- Meat and Fish
- Dairy products like yoghurts and cheese
- Eggs
- Bread, pastries and cakes
- Pasta, rice and beans
- Tea bags and coffee grounds
- Leftover pet food
- Leftover from plates
- Out of date food (without packaging)

If you're unsure about whether something can go in the caddies or not, find out more by visiting Wokingham Borough Council website www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search for "food waste collections" or by calling Wokingham Borough Customer Services Delivery team on (0118) 974 6000.

Q: What shouldn't go in my food waste caddies?

A: Anything that isn't food waste shouldn't go in your food waste caddies. Please see below:

- Cling film and wrapping
- Plastic or polystyrene pots or trays
- Tin foil or food containers
- Cardboard packaging
- Liquids
- Garden waste
- Glass or china
- Pet mess, litter or bedding
- Cooking oil – (must be presented within outdoor container in a sealed plastic bottle)

If you're unsure about whether something can go in the caddy or not, find out more by visiting Wokingham Borough Council website www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search for "food waste collections" or by calling Wokingham Borough Customer Services Delivery team on (0118) 974 6000.

Q: When will the service start?

A: Food waste collections will begin from April 2019.

Q: On what days will my food waste be collected?

A: We will collect your food waste from outdoor container every week on the same day as we collect your black box recycling.

Q: Where am I supposed to keep my new food waste caddies?

A: Your kitchen caddy is made to be small enough to fit comfortably in your kitchen without taking up too much space, perhaps on the counter or under the sink. Once the kitchen caddy is full you should empty it into your larger outdoor caddy, which you can keep outside or in a shed, outhouse or garage.

Please only put your larger outdoor caddy on the kerbside for collection. Your smaller kitchen caddy is for indoor use only.

Q: Whereabouts should I set out my outdoor food waste caddy on my collection day?

A: You should present your large outdoor food waste caddy at the kerbside, just next to your blue rubbish bags or black recycling box. It will be put back in the same place once it is emptied.

Q: I currently receive assistance with my waste and recycling service, can I still get this help with the new food waste service?

A: Wokingham Borough Council is happy to provide an assisted food waste collection for anyone who is genuinely in need. Residents who are on our assisted collection list will automatically be eligible for assisted collection for food waste. For more information, please go to the Wokingham Borough Council website www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search for “food waste collections” or call Wokingham Borough Customer Services Delivery team on (0118) 974 6000.

Q: Won't the food waste bin smell?

A: Although food waste will smell eventually, because your outdoor food waste caddy will be collected weekly and the food waste inside will be in tied up liners, the chance for any smells to build up will be minimised. If you empty your kitchen caddy into your larger outdoor caddy more regularly then the food waste may not have time to ‘go off’, keeping any potential smells out of the kitchen. Keep the larger outdoor caddy out of direct sunlight – a shed, outhouse or garage is an ideal place to store the bin to reduce any potential smell. It is also advisable to wash out the caddies regularly to stop any residues from building up.

Q: What about maggots and flies?

A: As your food waste is contained in tied up liners in your outdoor caddy and collected weekly, problems with pests like flies and maggots should be kept to a minimum. Keep the bin lids closed to minimise any fly problems. Always make sure that the lid of the larger outdoor caddy is down and locked properly, as this will ensure that flies will not be able to get in

Q: Will foxes, birds and other animals get into the outdoor caddy?

A: The larger outdoor caddy has a locking lid, so make sure the lid is down and locked properly when in use. If the bin is locked, animals and birds shouldn't be able to get into it. Using your food waste caddies will reduce litter caused by animals and birds ripping open blue bags to get at food waste.

Q: Will there be a build-up of liquids in the bin?

A: The kitchen caddy liners provided will help prevent a build-up of liquid by containing the food waste. However, you can also line the containers with newspaper, which can be treated in the anaerobic digestion plant along with the food waste.

Q: Why does the Council not provide compostable bags instead?

Our food waste will be processed using anaerobic digestion. Unfortunately compostable bags come out as a sponge after reprocessing thereby affecting the entire quality of the produce by making it unsuitable for any purposeful use.

Q: What happens to the bags used for containing food waste?

All the polythene bags are taken out before the reprocessing starts. These are used to generate electricity in the Energy from Waste (EfW).

Q: How can I get my containers if I am missed during delivery?

Please get in touch with us via www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search "food waste collection" to order your containers and liners. Alternatively these can also be collected from libraries and Council Offices.

Q: I am a new resident and or moved in to the new development. How can I get hold of your food waste containers?

Please get in touch with us via www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search "food waste collection" to order your containers and liners. Alternatively these can also be collected from libraries and Council Offices.

Q: I live in a flat. Will I be getting the new service?

A: To begin with, the food waste service will only be introduced to people living in houses. This is because flats come in lots of shapes and sizes with different access arrangements and waste and recycling services. Introducing a 'one size fits all' service might not be the best solution for everyone living in flats so, in order to get it right, we are delaying introduction so we can look at the best ways to provide effective food waste recycling services in each location.

Q: I live in a flat. Can I recycle my food waste?

People living in flats will receive food waste recycling services in due course and you will be contacted when this happens. Until then, please continue to use your current refuse and recycling services as normal, recycling as much as possible.

Q: Can I compost at home instead?

A: Yes you can. For details about how to compost at home visit the [Get Composting](#) website. You should only compost garden waste and uncooked waste vegetables and fruit (e.g. peelings and skins) as well as coffee grounds and tea bags. You can always use your food waste bin to recycle any extra food that you aren't able to compost at home.

Q: I don't want to recycle my food waste. What do I do?

A: We want as many people as possible to recycle as much food waste as they can. Most people living in Wokingham Borough will be using their caddies to recycle their food waste because it is simple and easy to do. If you don't recycle your food waste you will:

- Be contributing more to climate change by sending food waste to landfill where it will decompose and generate methane, a powerful greenhouse gas
- Not help to produce renewable energy or valuable fertiliser through recycling food waste in an anaerobic digestion plant
- Contribute to on-going problems of litter caused by animals and birds ripping open the blue rubbish bags to get at food waste

Q: What if I have a question that isn't answered here?

A: Further information regarding the new food waste service and common questions can be found on the Wokingham Borough Council website www.wokingham.gov.uk/ and search for "food waste collections" or call Wokingham Borough Customer Services Delivery team on (0118) 974 6000.

If you would like to talk to a member of the Cleaner and Green team, see the caddies and learn more about the new service we will be holding a series of Roadshows across the borough:

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