

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Common Concerns**

### **What do I do if my wheeled bin goes missing?**

Please check the immediate area first before reporting it to our Customer Service Centre. The Householder is expected to take reasonable care of the bin and provided this is shown no charge will be made for a replacement.

### **How do I clean my bins?**

If food waste and putrescible material are double wrapped bins stay quite clean. However they can be easily washed out with a little water and household detergent. There are also professional companies that offer a bin cleaning service - call our Customer Service Centre for more information and service providers.

### **Is the Green Bin Compulsory?**

The green bin is not compulsory but garden waste is not permitted in the grey bin. Many residents who home compost keep the green bin to store they're recycling in, but these sacks must be removed from the bin before they can be collected. Residents wishing to decline a green bin should contact the Customer Service Centre.

### **Can I wrap food waste in the green bin?**

The contents of the green bin are delivered to a composting plant and should therefore not contain any material that cannot be composted. Please do not put any plastic bags or even biodegradable bags in your green bin. Biodegradable bags vary in the quality and time they take to break down and the process used (called 'in-vessel') to compost the green and kitchen waste collected has a very quick turnaround. Bags contaminate the compost and will therefore be rejected either by our operational crews or by the composting contractor. If you wish to wrap kitchen waste, then please use newspaper.

### **Is storing refuse for two weeks a Health Risk?**

No - this is a common myth. If waste is properly contained in the bin there is no health risk their needs to be a pathway for any disease organism to affect humans. Wheeled bins are far more effective in containing any potential risk than sacks. Health and Safety for collection crews is also greatly improved.

### **Why don't we collect glass at kerbside?**

If glass is collected at kerbside the three main colours of glass have to be kept separate. This means using specialised three compartment vehicles and collection crews sorting the material on to the vehicle. This method of working is not compatible with the way we collect recycling. Instead glass is collected in Bring Banks and a surprisingly high proportion of glass is recovered, suggesting that people do make the effort to use the sites.

### **Where does our recycling go?**

The dry recyclables collected at kerbside such as plastic bottles, aerosols, mixed paper and card, aluminium foil, tins and cans all go to a factory where they are sorted and baled ready for the open market. Newspapers and magazines are sent to Aylesford and magazines are sent to Aylesford Newsprint in Kent, who then re-processes them into new newspapers. Glass, which is collected from the Bring Banks sites is sent to British Glass in Harlow to be re-processed into more glass bottles and jars. The green waste collected is taken to a composting facility where it is turned into a rich organic soil and used for landscaping and horticulture.

### **Doesn't it all get crushed in the lorry?**

No. The compactors in the lorries are set to 'a gentle push' so it moves the recycling sacks up into the lorry compartment, but does not squash or split the recycling sacks. This action helps to save space so that we can collect as much as possible before having to empty the lorry.

### **What about additional waste over Christmas?**

The Green Bin collections are suspended over Christmas, as there is very little garden waste at this time of year. This allows us to use vehicles and crews to make additional collections of the Grey Bin. Please check your Collection Calendar for this change in service as the dates are clearly marked. Why does material for kerbside collection have to be put out so early in the morning?

Although our collection rounds try to pick up your materials at the same time each week we need to keep some flexibility in the system to allow for vehicle breakdowns, staffing problems and expanding the service to other areas.

### **Why do we only have banks for plastic bottles in the Braintree area?**

Because of the volume they take up plastic bottles are expensive to store and transport, both in economic and environmental terms. Collection of plastic bottles is more viable as part of an integrated kerbside collection and this service is now available to all households in the District.

### **What about other types of plastic?**

Before we can collect material for recycling we need to be satisfied that there is a re-processing route available. At the present time the only market available to us for recycling plastic is restricted to plastic food packaging, such as yoghurt pots, margarine tubs and plastic bottles.

### **Why do we have bags and not boxes for recycling?**

Some Councils use bags and some use boxes. Bag collections are more suitable for Councils such as Braintree that have their own sorting factories; they enable high volume material such as plastic bottles and cardboard to be collected. Boxes are more suited to Councils that do not have the facilities to sort and bale material. Sorting takes place at the roadside making collections slower and more expensive, but this method does permit glass recycling.

### **How do I get more black and clear sacks?**

A supply of clear recycling sacks is delivered twice a year. Your recycling sacks should last 6 months, but if you run out simply telephone the dedicated request line on 0800 074 8243 and sacks will be delivered within the next two weeks. Alternatively call at one of the Council's area offices or local Libraries. Please do not use recycling sacks for general refuse - they will not be collected.

Residents on weekly black sack collections will receive 52 sacks in two rolls annually, enough for one sack per week. Additional supplies of black sacks are not available.

### **Why doesn't everyone in the District get the full recycling service?**

All properties in the District are served by the same fortnightly kerbside collection of materials for recycling. If you think you have been missed out please let us know. Only about half of these properties receive a separate collection of garden waste. This service is an integral part of the alternate weekly collection scheme and will only be introduced elsewhere if this wheeled bin scheme is expanded. Meanwhile we have introduced weekend collections of garden waste in areas not served by the kerbside system.

### **And, on the very odd occasion (!), why recycle?**

#### Ten Reasons for Recycling

1. Recycling saves energy.
2. Recycling saves resources.
3. Recycling reduces global warming.
4. Recycling saves landfill.
5. Recycling protects wildlife.
6. Recycling protects forests.
7. Recycling protects the countryside.
8. Recycling creates jobs.
9. Recycling is easy.
10. Recycling makes you feel good about helping the planet.