

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSEHOLD WASTE SERVICE STANDARDS

Updated April 2026

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1. Introduction

About Your Waste Collection Service

Wokingham Borough Council has statutory responsibility to collecting household waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This means we make sure your rubbish and recycling are collected safely and efficiently.

Section 46 of the Act The law allows us to set:

- The size and type of bins and containers we provide
- Where you should place them for collection
- What can and cannot go in each container

Our goals are simple:

- Help you reduce waste by making recycling and reuse easy
- Improve recycling so we capture more materials and keep them high quality
- Provide a service that's good value for money and environmentally responsible
- Make sure collections are reliable and customer service is responsive

This service standard/policy explains what you can expect from us and what we need from you to keep the service running smoothly.

2. The Household Waste Service

2.1 The standard waste and collection services provided by Wokingham Borough Council are summarised in the table below:

Container	Material Collected	Collection Frequency	Chargeable
Black 180 litre/240 litre general waste wheeled bin	Non-recyclable household waste	Fortnightly	No
Blue bags 90 litre (storage issue properties only)	Non-recyclable household waste	Weekly	No
Green 60 litre recycling bag	Plastic bottles, food containers, card, paper, aluminium, and steel cans	Fortnightly	No
Black 23 litre food waste bin	Cooked food, uncooked food waste and cooking oil in plastic bottles	Weekly	No
Brown 240 litre garden waste wheeled bin	Plant waste e.g., grass, hedge cuttings, small branches, flowers	Fortnightly	Yes

Single use 75 litre compostable brown sacks	Plant waste e.g., grass, hedge cuttings, small branches, flowers & weeds	Fortnightly	Yes
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*Properties with communal waste facilities, typically blocks of flats normally have a weekly collection for all waste but local variations may apply. Please refer to the website for collection days.

3. Container Provision

General Waste – Black Wheeled Bin

Every household should have **one standard WBC official 180-litre black wheeled bin** for general waste.

- 3.1. If your property has **limited or no frontage** or cannot be accessed by our standard collection vehicle, you'll receive **54 blue sacks** each year instead.
- 3.2. Blue sacks are collected weekly, with one sack per collection. After bank holidays, you can put out two sacks on two occasions.
- 3.3. Developers or managing agents are responsible for providing all waste containers for new build properties and property conversions.

Extra Capacity

3.4. Some households may qualify for extra waste capacity You can apply if:

- You have **hygiene waste** (e.g., incontinence pads, stoma bags) that cannot be recycled and doesn't fit in your bin
- There are six or more permanent residents in your home
- Your property is a registered House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO)
- Applications will only be approved if the recycling bags, food waste bins and bring banks are being fully utilised

3.5. If you have more than one child in nappies and are already making full use of your recycling bags and food waste collections, you can apply for **one extra bag**:

- The extra bag will be collected **every fortnight** with your black bin
- The council will provide the bags which need to be collected from Shute End
- Applications are reviewed annually, and we'll check that recycling and food waste bins are being used properly before approving.
- Consider alternatives to disposable nappies, the councils Real Nappy Cash Back scheme can be found here [Reduce, re-use and recycle \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/reduce-re-use-and-recycle)

Bin Ownership and Replacements

- 3.6. Bins belong to the council and must stay at the property if you move home.
- 3.7. If your bin is **lost, stolen, or damaged**, you'll need to buy a replacement from the Council
- 3.8. All bins are for **household waste only**. They cannot be used for commercial purposes, and our crews will only empty official WBC bins.
- 3.9. Replacement bins are usually delivered within **10 working days**.

Recycling – Green bag

- 3.10. Every property is expected to use **60-litre waterproof green recycling bags** to keep recycling dry
- 3.11. Please **seal the Velcro strips** at the top of the bags.
- 3.12. If you live in a property with shared facilities, see section 9 for details.
- 3.13. Write your house name or number clearly displayed on the bags to prevent loss or theft.
- 3.14. Keep bags indoors (shed/garage) when not in use – sunlight can damage them.
- 3.15. There is no limit to the number of recycling bags presented for collection as long as they only contain the items listed in table 4.4 below
- 3.16. Need a new bag? You can **collect replacements from hubs** around the borough which can be found here [Collect or order recycling bags \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](http://wokingham.gov.uk) or if unable to collect, can be [ordered for delivery](#)

Food waste – black outdoor bin

- 3.17. We provide :
 - A **grey 5-litre indoor kitchen caddy** for indoor use.
 - A **black** and a **black 23- litre lockable bin** for outdoor collection.
 - If you live in a property with **shared facilities**, see Section 4 for details.

4. What items can be placed into the waste container?

General waste black wheeled bin

- 4.1 Your black wheeled bin is for **household waste that cannot be recycled** at the kerbside, local recycling banks, or [Recycling Centres](#)
- 4.2 Waste in this bin is sent to an **Energy from Waste facility (EfW)** or landfill, which is **more expensive and less environmentally friendly**. Please make sure your bin is **safe to empty**:
 - The lid must be **fully closed**.
 - **Overloaded or very heavy bins will not be collected** and will be recorded by the crew.
 - If your bin is too heavy, you'll need to **remove some waste before the next collection**.
- 4.3 What can or cannot go in your bin or blue bags.

General Waste – What Can and Cannot Go in Your Bin

✔ Accepted	✘ Not accepted
General waste that cannot be recycled, reused, or composted	Food waste (use the 23-litre food waste bin)
Nappies and sanitary waste	Recyclable items (place in green recycling bags)
Pet bedding and animal waste	Garden waste (use the brown garden waste bin)



	Polystyrene
	Small electrical items (WEEE)
	Batteries and vapes
	Rubble and soil
	Hot ashes
	Hazardous or clinical waste (including sharps and blood products)
	Asbestos
	Pesticides, paint, and oils

Recycling green bags or black boxes

- 4.4 Put all recycling **loose in the green bags provided- do not use plastic bags.**
- 4.5 If your recycling contains items that are not listed in the 'Yes Please' column, it will be marked as contaminated and will not be collected - It's your responsibility to remove any incorrect items and present the bag again on your next scheduled collection.
- 4.6 Please rinse plastic pots, tubs and trays to remove food remnants in them which will help eliminate smells and pests.

What can and cannot go in your green bags:

Dry recycling – What Can and Cannot Go in Your Bags

 Accepted	 Not accepted
Paper and card	Glass bottles and jars*
Plastic bottles (drinks, toiletries, bleach and detergents)	Food waste
Empty drinks and food cans	Nappies or sanitary waste
Empty aerosols	Plastic bags
Plastic food trays (excluding black plastic)	Black plastic food trays
Food tubs (margarine, yoghurt, cream pots, snack pots)	Food wrappers
Cosmetic pots and tubs (no lids)	Kitchen towels, tissues, and wet wipes
Foil trays and clean foil	Polystyrene
Cartons	Textiles*

4.7 Bins that contain items other than in the 'Yes Please' column above will not be emptied and will be recorded as 'contaminated.' It is the resident's responsibility to remove the items we do not accept and dispose of them accordingly before the next scheduled collection.

Food Waste black outdoor bin and indoor caddy

- 4.8 Plastic bags such as bread or carrier bags can be used to line the indoor food waste caddy. Newspaper or paper bags can also be used to line the indoor bins, although waste can be placed loose in the container.
- 4.9 The indoor kitchen caddy should not be presented for collection, it will not be emptied: only the 23ltr black food waste bin should be presented.



Food Waste – What Can and Cannot Go in Your Food Bin

✔ Accepted	✘ Not accepted
Dairy products and eggshells	Food packaging
Bread, cakes, pasta, and rice	Large amounts of liquids such as milk
Raw and cooked meat, fish, and bones	Pet waste, litter, or bedding
Uneaten food, and out-of-date foods	Any material that is not food
Raw and cooked fruit and vegetables and peelings	<u>Garden waste</u>
Tea and coffee bags and grounds	
Pet foods	
Cooking oil sealed in a plastic bottle inside your outdoor food waste bin.	

- 4.10 Bins that contain items other than in the 'Yes Please' column above will not be emptied and will be recorded as 'contaminated.' It is the resident's responsibility to remove the items we do not accept and dispose of them accordingly before the next scheduled collection.
- 4.11 Liners and bags will be removed from the food waste at the treatment plant and sent to Energy from Waste.
- 4.12 We recommend frequent cleaning of the food waste bins and caddies to eliminate odours and pests.

Garden Waste - brown wheeled bin or brown sacks

- 4.13 Garden waste should be placed loose in the bin(s) or sack(s), no plastic bags.
- 4.14 Bins or sacks that contain items other than in the 'Yes Please' column below will not be emptied and will be recorded as 'contaminated.' It is the resident's responsibility to remove the items we do not accept and dispose of them accordingly before the next scheduled collection.
- 4.15 Garden Waste – Accepted and Not-Accepted Materials

 Accepted	 Not accepted
Grass cuttings and leaves	Animal waste
Hedge clippings	General household waste
Flowers and weeds	Food and kitchen waste
Small branches	Large branches
	Pet or animal bedding
	Soil and stones
	Japanese Knotweed

- 4.16 Garden waste bins are designed to be emptied safely and presented with lids closed. Any overloaded or heavy bins will not be collected and will be recorded as heavy by crews. Residents will be required to lighten the bins before the next scheduled collection.
- 4.17 During cold spells, garden waste may freeze and prevent the council from emptying the bin either fully or partially. In this event, the council will return on the next scheduled collection.
- 4.18 The council reserves the right to suspend collections in extreme situations such as pandemics or bad weather.

5 Presentation of waste containers

- 5.1 All waste containers should be placed beside the nearest public (council maintained) pavement/footpath, normally in front of the property in a position that does not obstruct access to pedestrians and other users including wheelchair users, and those with pushchairs.
- 5.2 All containers must be presented without any obstruction and clearly visible to our collection crews.
- 5.3 Once collection takes place it is your responsibility to remove all containers within 24 hours of collection. Containers are not to be left out after this time.
- 5.4 Unless otherwise notified, general waste, recycling and food containers are emptied on the same day of the week.
- 5.5 Recycling bags and general waste black wheeled bins should be presented on alternate weeks along with the food waste bins.
- 5.6 The lids on the recycling bags/boxes must always be securely on, to stop water getting into the recycling. The house number should be clearly displayed box to avoid them being lost or stolen.

- 5.7 Waste containers must be presented at the edge of the property by 6:30am on the collection day or by 5:30am on bank holidays. We recommend putting waste out the night before to ensure collection as collection times can and do vary. We do not collect on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Years Day. Waste not presented at the collection time is recorded by the crews as “not presented” and will not be collected until the next scheduled collection.
- 5.8 Collections can take place at any time between 5.30 am and 4pm. Collection times can vary and are not guaranteed.
- 5.9 Bin lids should be closed and any bins presented with the lids up will be left and will be recorded by the crew as ‘overfilled’.
- 5.10 Any waste not contained within the bin with the lid closed and/or left at the side of the bin will not be collected and if it is not removed from the public highway will be regarded as fly tipping and investigated.
- 5.11 Residents with blue bag collections are responsible for the clean-up of any littering arising from ripped or split bags prior to the collection of the bags. To prevent this happening, please make full use of the food waste bin
- 5.12 The Council reserves the right to change the location of any collection points for operational reasons.
- 5.13 Adopt A Street volunteers can present authorised or approved street litter bags for collection alongside their wheeled bin. Adopt a Street bags used for waste from residents' properties will be treated as fly tipping and will be investigated.

6 Garden Waste

- 6.1 Wokingham Borough Council offers a chargeable fortnightly garden waste service which is operational for 52 weeks (26 collections) of the year.
- 6.2 Residents can subscribe to an annual garden waste bin collection service which runs between April and March the following year. Terms and conditions can be found here ([Order garden waste collection \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/order-garden-waste-collection))
- 6.3 Residents can purchase 75 litre compostable sacks online (and collect from the Council’s collection hubs) and will need to book a collection on the required scheduled collection day.
- 6.4 Properties on narrow access routes are unable to subscribe to the garden waste bin scheme but can purchase compostable sacks to participate in the service.
- 6.5 The garden waste collection service is for domestic properties only. Commercial properties and businesses are excluded from the scheme.
- 6.6 Waste generated by gardeners at domestic properties is classed as ‘commercial waste’ and should be removed by the person undertaking the work. The council does not subsidise businesses in disposing of their waste.
- 6.7 Residents who move home within the borough and still require the service should take the garden waste bin with them and contact the council to update the subscription to the new address.
- 6.8 Residents will be required to purchase replacement bins in the event of damage, wear and tear or loss.
- 6.9 The Council will replace bins free of charge that have fallen into the vehicle or been damaged by the crew and reported by crews on collection day.
- 6.10 New or purchased replacement bins will usually be delivered within 10 working days.

7 Bulky Waste Collections

- 7.1 The council provides a chargeable bulky waste collection service for up to three items and three free small electrical items which can be booked online {link to booking}
- 7.2 Collections can be booked up to 8 weeks in advance and can be cancelled up to 3pm the day before collection.
- 7.3 Amendments can be made by cancelling the order and rebooking with the correct items. There is no guarantee that your previously selected slot will remain available should you wish to raise a new booking.
- 7.4 Items should be left by the boundary at the front of the property by 6.30am on the morning of collection.
- 7.5 We will not collect items such as pianos, treadmills, or cross trainers, built-in furniture, garden waste, bagged waste, rubble, items of DIY nature, commercial waste, clinical or hazardous waste. The contractor will confirm the items booked are acceptable for collection.
- 7.6 Please see our website for items that we can/cannot collect. [Bulky Waste Collections](#)
- 7.7 Old IT equipment can be donated at [Wokingham Directory | Wokingham Library](#), [Wokingham Directory | Woodley Library](#), or [Wokingham Directory | Lower Earley Library](#) as part of our Digital Donations scheme.

8 Clinical Waste

- 8.1 We provide free one-off or regular collections of clinical waste for residents treating themselves at home. Clinical waste is anything that could be infected or hazardous e.g.:
 - Blood or bodily fluids
 - Dialysis waste
 - Stoma bags
 - Medical swabs and dressings
 - Syringes and needles
 - Double-wrap other medical waste (incontinence pads, nappies etc.) and put in your grey rubbish bin.
- 8.2 The local health authority provides the first sharps box, which you can get on prescription from your GP or pharmacist.
- 8.3 Residents that are self-treating a medical condition at home and require a regular clinical waste sack collection will need to be referred for a clinical waste collection by a GP surgery, district nurse, hospital or NHS trust [link]
- 8.4 Waste in the form of incontinence pads, stoma bags should be double bagged and placed in your general waste bin.
- 8.5 If a resident is in receipt of care from a healthcare professional, any waste produced during treatment should be removed and disposed of by the healthcare professional.
- 8.6 The Council's contractor will provide replacement containers on collection. Replacements are based on the same number of containers left as those collected (i.e., one for one).
- 8.7 Residents are required to leave the clinical waste for collection close to their property, usually in a discreet location and agreed prior to the commencement of collections. Replacement containers are left in the same location.
- 8.8 Collection currently takes place three days per week and collections may occur early morning through to late afternoon on that day.

- 8.9 If a clinical bag service is no longer required residents should cancel the service using this link [Clinical waste collection \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](http://wokingham.gov.uk)
- 8.10 If no clinical waste has been presented from a regular user of the service for three consecutive weeks, or minimal amounts of clinical waste are being presented, the resident will be contacted to confirm if they still require the service. Further collections will be suspended until confirmation is received that the service is required.
- 8.11 Sharps and clinical waste which are generated by an intravenous drug user will not be collected through the council's clinical waste collection service. If the resident is part of a needle return scheme, the sharps should be returned to the agreed location in the container provided.
- 8.12 Landlords or managing agents are responsible for the disposal of any clinical waste which is left in their premises by tenants when they leave. Once the tenant has vacated, this waste becomes commercial, and it is the responsibility of the landlord/managing agent to arrange collection by a licensed waste contractor at their cost.

9 Communal Properties (flats)

- 9.1 Communal properties are provided with bins which are kept in a bin store and shared by all the residents in the block. Provision of bins for general waste, recycling and food waste is the responsibility of the developer or management company. Black wheeled bins are provided for general waste in line with our weekly allowance of 80-litre per household.
- 9.2 Bins are designed to be emptied safely therefore bin lids should be closed. Any bins with open lids due to excess waste protruding will not be collected.
- 9.3 Any additional waste left outside of the bins will not be collected and can lead to a missed collection if access is blocked to the bins. In such instances it will be the responsibility of the management company or residents to clear the bin store. Our contractor will not return to clear the waste until the next collection date. The Council reserves the right to remove any bins which are more than the weekly allowance of 80 litres for general waste per household.
- 9.4 Bins for recycling must be blue in colour and should not exceed 1100 litre capacity. There is no limit on the amount of recycling and bins must be provided by the management company in line with a minimum weekly allowance of 120 litre per household to encourage residents to recycle conveniently and appropriately. Any recycling left outside of bins will be left uncollected.
- 9.5 A 240-litre red communal food waste bin is required for shared disposal and is stored in the bin store. Refer to Section 2 on Food Waste to find out what and how you should recycle your food waste.
- 9.6 Upkeep and maintenance of bins and the bin store is the responsibility of the residents and/or the management company. Any repair or replacement of bins is the responsibility of the management company. This includes notifying the council of any changes to bin store codes.
- 9.7 Bin stores are not for storing larger unwanted items (bulky waste). If these are present, it may mean that bins cannot be emptied. Bulky waste items can be disposed of using our chargeable collection service [Large Unwanted Items](#) or by taking the items to our recycling centres.

10 Assisted Collection

- 10.1 The Council provides (on request) Assisted Collection to residents who are physically unable to put out their waste at the required collection point and who do not have another person in the household able to do it for them.
- 10.2 The council does not provide an assisted collection for residents that have communal waste facilities but recommend that waste is put out in small quantities as and when able or to contact the property management for help and advice if this is not feasible.
- 10.3 Collection points will need to be visible within the boundary of the property, not behind gates and no more than 25 meters from the kerbside.
- 10.4 Collection points will be agreed between residents and the Council in consultation with our Contractor.

11 Missed Collections

- 11.1 If any of the waste containers are not collected on the scheduled day, residents are required to report missed bins via the online reporting form no later than the end of the following working day after the scheduled collection.
- 11.2 We will investigate and return to any genuinely missed container the following working day of a report being received.
- 11.3 Collections missed due to parked cars will be returned to at the earliest available opportunity. Residents should park considerately to allow enough room for the collection vehicle to manoeuvre safely.
- 11.4 The following list, which is not exhaustive, can lead to a missed collection that we will not return for:
 - Containers not presented at the correct collection point.
 - Overflowing bins with lids not fully closed.
 - Additional waste presented to the side of the containers.
 - Containers not presented at the time of collection.
 - Items presented in bins, bags, or box that we do not collect kerbside.
 - Waste presented on the wrong collection week.
 - Heavy bins or bags.
 - Access issues due to overgrown vegetation.
- 11.5 If the crew have reported any of the issues above, we will not return to collect the containers until the next scheduled collection.
- 11.6 If containers have the wrong items in them (contamination), we will collect the waste once the wrong items have been removed by the resident, on the next scheduled collection.

12 Private Roads

12.1 Where a household is on a private or an un-adopted road, the councils' collection vehicles will usually only collect from the road where:

- The road surface is of sound construction to a suitable solid surface free of potholes and obstructions and meets the standard for adoption by the Highways authority.
- The road is a minimum width of 5m with no obstruction from trees, shrubs, etc which could cause damage to the side of the vehicle.
- Minimum height clearance is more than 4 metres with no obstruction from overhanging branches, cables etc., which could cause damage to the roof of the vehicle.
- A through road does not exist. A suitable turning area must be available to allow the vehicle to turn round. The area should be sufficient to allow the vehicle to turn with no more than three manoeuvres- i.e., 10.22 metres kerb to kerb.
- It is safe to stop and park the collection vehicle to collect waste, without causing risk, hazard or obstruction to other road users or pedestrians.
- The Council has been provided with a signed Indemnity.

12.2 The council may change any collection point, either temporarily or permanently, following a review of compliance with condition 12.1. If it is the Councils' belief that the access to or location of the collection point would be unsafe for collections due to deterioration in the road surface, or overhanging/encroaching vegetation, residents will be asked to present their waste containers on the nearest public highway or an agreed alternative location on collection day.

12.3 The council will (where possible to do so) give at least ten working days' notice of any changes to the location of a collection point, highlighting the alternative site to the affected households. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis to agree a suitable collection point as near to the boundary as is safe and practicable.

13 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Help sustain the environment for future generations by reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfills and incinerators by:

13.1 Help sustain the environment for future generations by reducing the amount of waste being sent to landfills and incinerators by:

- Reduce the waste you produce in the first place.
- Re-use items as much as you can.
- Consider repairing or finding an alternative use before throwing items away.
- Advertise on websites and apps that sell or give away items for free.

13.2 The re3 Reuse Area at both Recycling Centres allows residents to drop off reusable items for other residents to reuse, or to be donated to Sue Ryder to be resold by the charity.

13.3 Donate your items to local charities and organisations such as:

Item	How to donate
Batteries	Any shop selling batteries will have a collection point. Take used batteries to the recycling centre . Batteries are a hazard so don't put them out for a kerbside collection.
Disposable nappies and wipes	Try reusable nappies as an easy and cost-effective alternative. Use our nappy cashback scheme. Fill in and return Real nappy cashback scheme form (PDF document)
Furniture	Take unwanted furniture to the recycling centre . Donate unwanted furniture to Age UK .
Glass bottles and jars	Return to a local bottle bank and keep the metal lids on. All other broken glass can be taken to the recycling centre.
Laptops	Recycling Technology (Retec) has been launched to support local families. Visit the Wokingham Lions website for drop-off points and information.
Printer ink and toner cartridges	Return to the supplier or check your local shop that sells cartridges. Visit the Stinkyink website.
Shoes, clothes and bags	Donate these to your favourite local charity shop or your local donation bank . Sell or give away for free online.
Soft plastics	These include plastic bags and packaging for fruit, vegetables, crisps and biscuits. Read the packaging for advice on what can be recycled. Check if your local supermarket has a collection point for soft plastics.

13.4 The ADC (Anglo Doorstep Collections) doorstep collection service is free and offers residents a convenient way to give pre-loved items a second life while supporting selected charities. Items such as clothing, shoes, small electricals, towels, and children's toys in good condition will be reused wherever possible for their original intended purpose. For every collection, ADC makes a charitable donation to one of its partner charities and plants a tree for each booking made.

[The full list of items Anglo can collect](#)

14 Local Tip – Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRC's) and Bring Banks

14.1 Residents may use either the Smallmead or Longshot Lane [HWRC's](#) to dispose of recycling materials, excess waste, and DIY materials.

- 14.2 Residents are required to book a slot via the Click and tip service and take proof of Wokingham residency with you. These sites are operated on behalf of the Council and its other partners, Bracknell and Reading Councils, by RE3 Ltd.
- 14.3 Residents can recycle glass bottles and jars and textiles at any of our neighbourhood [Bring Banks](#) throughout the Borough.
- 14.4 A full list of items we accept can be found here [Waste you can bring section of the Re3 website](#) .
- 14.5 If you have hazardous waste, such as chemicals or asbestos, please contact your local council for specialist advice before visiting the HWRC.
- 14.6 Remember to check opening hours and any restrictions on vehicle types or the amount of waste you can bring to the site in advance.